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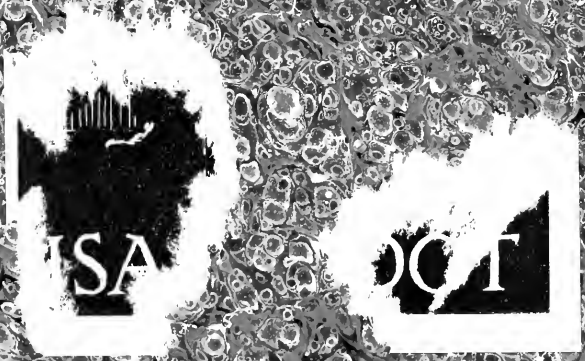
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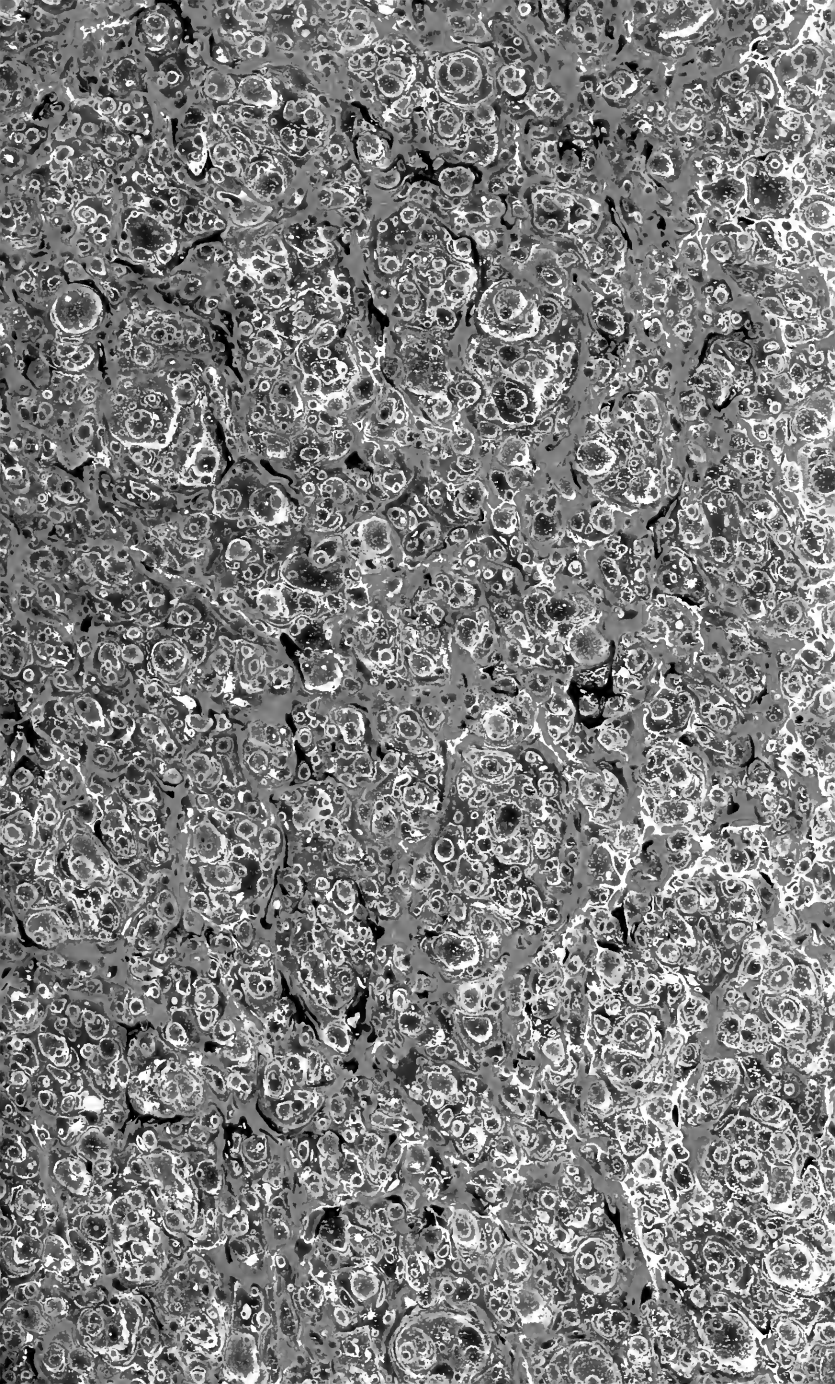

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TALLEYRAND.

VOL. II.

TALLEYRAND.

By LADY BLENNERHASSETT
(GRÄFIN LEYDEN).

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
By FREDERICK CLARKE,
Late Taylorian Scholar in the University of Oxford.

"Les hommes à principes sont dispensés de réussir. Le succès est au contraire pour les habiles une condition obligée."—A. THIERS, "*Consulat et Empire*," xviii., 99.

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CHAPTER XII.

TALLEYRAND AND THE FRENCH CONCORDAT.

1801.

THE year 1801 found Talleyrand engaged in another treaty of peace, the most important of all those with which he had to deal, and the only one which has preserved up to this day the form which was then given it. Napoleon had long made up his mind to make peace between France and the Church. His consideration for the religious sentiments of the Italian people during the campaign of 1796 shocked the "prêtrophobes" of the Directory; even then he told them frankly to their faces: "J'ambitionne bien plus le titre de sauveur que celui de destructeur de la papauté." At a time when even Talleyrand prophesied the inevitable fate of the temporal power of the Pope, Bonaparte wrote to Carnot: "Diminuez le nombre de vos ennemis: l'influence de Rome est incalculable. On a très mal fait de rompre avec cette puissance." As

far back as 1796 he had in view a Concordat between Rome and the Cisalpine Republic. The Directory, which had to reckon with a constitutional majority of moderates, was in consequence obliged, very much against its will, to order the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Delacroix, to draft an outline of a concordat in concert with the papal nuncio Salamon, who was exercising his functions secretly in France. This draft was based on the recognition of the civil constitution by the Pope, and came to nothing, owing to his refusal to sanction the oath which the Directory required from the clergy. This took place before Tolentino, while the Pope still counted on Naples to protect him against France. But after the latter had made peace with the French Republic, the Pope gave up the Legations at Tolentino, on the 19th of February, 1797. The unfortunate incident of the murder of the French General Duphot led to the captivity of Pius VI. and the proclamation of the Romish Republic a year afterwards. This creation proved an ephemeral one, as Napoleon had rightly foreseen. A month after the death of the venerable Pope at Valence, in September 1799, it came to an end in consequence of the victories of the second coalition. The Neapolitans and Austrians were in joint occupation of the States of the Church when thirty-five of the forty-six Cardinals met in conclave at Venice, in Austrian territory. The Emperor's confidant, Cardinal Herzan, was commissioned to bring

about the election of Cardinal Mattei, because the latter had signed the treaty of Tolentino and approved the cession of the Legations, which were the object of Austria's ambition in Italy. Herzan acted so clumsily that what seemed impossible actually happened, and a compact opposition led by Consalvi secured the election of Chiaramonti, who was opposed to all surrender of papal territory.

Talleyrand at first did not grasp the significance of the event. He requested Spain to contest the election of Pius VII. as illegal, so completely did he consider him the Pope of the coalition. But the reverse was the truth. Ranke places these very proceedings at Venice among the events which led to its break-up. Political motives alienated Austria from the Papacy; Spain under the Urquijo Ministry aimed at nothing less than the restoration of the old independence of the Spanish Church; Catholic Bavaria was counted a determined opponent of the ecclesiastical electoral princes; and in South Germany the clergy and bishops were infected with Febronian views. "Under the pretext that the Pope is not free by reason of his dependence on France," complained Consalvi to Spina, "the Catholic sovereigns wish to throw off his authority and place all power in the hands of the bishops." From Madrid to Vienna, from Naples to Cologne, a reaction had long set in among all governments against absolute monarchy in the Church and in favour of a strengthening

of the episcopate. At this juncture the Papacy in its distress met with an unexpected deliverer, who spontaneously proposed the destruction of the most powerful of all the ecclesiastical organisations which had maintained their privileges against Rome. This saviour was Napoleon, and the bribe which he offered the Gallican Church. In the East his observation of the Mahommedan sects and their relations with Constantinople had confirmed him in his conviction of the necessity of an understanding between France and Rome. The state of things which he found in the religious world on his return accelerated his resolution.

The sixty thousand priests of the constitutional clergy had lived during the religious persecution, which did not spare even them, on voluntary offerings; after the period of official disbelief, when the free exercise of religion was permitted, they had been in charge of 32,214 parishes. But not being recognised by Rome, and being deserted by the faithful after the return of the non-juring priests, they resembled a body of officers without troops: "Beaucoup de prêtres et peu de fidèles, de bonnes maximes et point de crédit, riche en ministres, pauvres en sectateurs," is Hauterive's description of them, and, consequently, in Napoleon's eyes they were only of value as a means of putting pressure on Rome when her demands became troublesome. Ecclesiastical authority was represented by the pre-revolutionary episcopate. But persecution and

exile had bound it all the closer to the Monarchy, the fortunes of which it shared. The bishops, who, with the exception of twelve that remained in France, had administered their dioceses from abroad since 1792, were considered as agents of the emigration.

In the meanwhile a new power had arisen in the French Church by the side of the Constitutionals and the Gallicans. Whenever death made a gap in the ranks of the episcopate, the vacant see, instead of being administered by the chapter, as in the old days, was ruled by a substitute appointed directly by Rome and exercising his office in secret; and thus the clergy, which had so long and so strenuously defended the prerogatives of the national Church against external attack, found itself driven by the force of circumstances into ultramontanism. Both in Church and State the experiment which was begun in the name of liberty ended in loss of independence and infringement of rights. These vital questions of internal organisation were entirely lost upon Napoleon. In Church as well as in State he aimed at a tightly-drawn centralisation to counteract a hostile monarchical episcopate. The best means of attaining it was by the superior authority of the Pope. "If the Pope had not existed," said Napoleon afterwards, "we should have had to create him for this particular occasion, just as the Roman consuls used to appoint a dictator in difficult times." He did not doubt for a moment that in course of time

he would succeed in getting the Pope completely into his hands; "and then what a power!" he added, referring to Italy quite as much as to France. In the six months which elapsed between Brumaire and Marengo he confined himself to conciliatory measures. Churches were reopened for public worship; instead of taking the oath, priests were only required to promise obedience to the existing authorities; the mortal remains of Pius VI. received the honours of solemn interment. The Abbé Bernier, who, as *curé* of St. Laud, was a leader in La Vendée, negotiated with the First Consul concerning the pacification of the West. "The Paris atheists," as Bonaparte called them, Laplace, Chaptal, Roederer, Fouché, and Talleyrand, the leaders of the Convention and of the Directorial epoch, heard him propound views which sounded strange in their ears, as to the power of tradition, and the impossibility of governing a godless people. "C'est un parti pris," was Fouché's opinion.

Europe was on the eve of Marengo. In Madrid Godoy was promoting a clerical reaction in order to return to power. On the 3rd of July, 1800, Pius VII. returned to Rome, which was still occupied by the Neapolitans, against Thugut's wishes, and a few days afterwards the Spanish ambassador Labrador brought a verbal message from Talleyrand on French Church matters, the purport of which is given in a letter of his to the First Consul.

"J'ai cru," writes Talleyrand, "devoir l'entretenir des vues de pacification et de concorde religieuse du Premier Consul. Je lui ai dit que la France ne voulait point l'abolition de la puissance séculière du prince de l'Église, ni celle de sa suprématie spirituelle; qu'il existait en France un clergé romain, auquel le gouvernement de la République consentait à accorder toute la latitude de tolérance qui était nécessaire à son organisation sans compromettre celle de l'État, qu'on n'exigeait de lui aucun serment, mais qu'on attendait de sa Sainteté qu'il exhorterait le clergé qui lui était soumis à l'obéissance, qu'il lui inspirerait des idées de modération et de concorde à l'égard des prêtres qui avaient prêté des serments qu'on n'exigeait plus aujourd'hui, et qu'enfin il donnerait son approbation à toutes les lois fiscales et politiques que l'Assemblée avait portées sur le clergé, en exceptant seulement la partie de ses dispositions pénales auxquelles la modération et la justice du nouveau gouvernement venaient de mettre un terme."

Talleyrand, adds Labrador, offered the restoration of the States of the Church on the basis of Tolentino, *i.e.*, with the exception of the Legations, refused to commit himself in writing, and referred to the First Consul, with whose detailed plans he said he was not acquainted. Twelve days after Marengo the latter had the historical conversation with Martiniana, Bishop of Vercelli, in the course of which he threw over the

Constitutional Church, although it is not certain that he called the clergy, as Cardinal Maury informed Louis XVIII., "un tas de brigands déshonorés." In return for this he demanded a reduction in the number of bishops and a redivision of the sees, the appointment of a new episcopate, to be nominated by him and confirmed by the Pope and to be paid by the State, and with regard to the temporal power he gave assurances which Martiniana interpreted as a promise that the Legations should be given back to the Pope. The Concordat is the product of a compromise between the views embodied in these two conversations, leaning, however, decidedly to the side of Talleyrand.

In Rome it was resolved to send Monsignor Spina, Archbishop of Corinth *in partibus*, as plenipotentiary to Paris, and his instructions forbade him, among other things, to have any official intercourse with the three surviving "apostate" bishops of Orléans, Viviers and Autun, and with the constitutional episcopate, "salva l'urbanità." As regards Talleyrand, who was Minister for Foreign Affairs, special directions were given not to offend him in any way, as, after all, it was better to have to deal with an apostate bishop than with an atheistical philosopher; for however much he might have forsworn or forgotten, he always retained some recollection of his old faith. The first impression which Talleyrand made on Spina was favourable; Spina found him anxious for peace in the Church, and

quite ready to make his own with the Pope; "presto canterà a Sua Santità la sua palinodìa," was his sanguine report to Consalvi. But it soon turned out that "the Bishop" had not the slightest intention of playing the part of a penitent. So far from this being the case, it was he who with inexorable consistency, after an almost interminable dispute extending over twelve months, led the negotiations back to the very point from which he had started them.

The publication and careful perusal of the 855 notes exchanged between June 1800 and August 1801 leaves no doubt that the settlement of the affairs of the French Church only formed a part of the negotiations, and that the question of the temporal power of the Papacy was not less important to Rome. Both Pius VII. and his Secretary of State Consalvi pledged themselves when in Venice to the recovery of the Legations, because they considered it impossible, for purely financial reasons, to retain what was left of the Church's territory without them. Consistency required that they should demand, if not Avignon and Carpentras, at all events an indemnity for these papal *enclaves*, annexed by France in 1791; and, besides this, they knew that the property of the Catholic Church would be threatened elsewhere, and especially in Germany, by fresh secularisations if they could not succeed in inducing the Powers to abandon the principle in virtue of which that Church has been injured and despoiled from the days of the

Peace of Westphalia up to the present time. But, on the other hand, the settlement of the religious question in France could not be made dependent on concessions of a political nature without attaching to the Papal negotiators the stigma of driving an undignified bargain. After a last ineffectual endeavour in October to obtain the restoration of the Legations from Austria, the Papal See appealed to Prussia for assistance, then to England, and especially to the Tsar Paul, who was favourably disposed towards the Pope, as he counted on concessions in matters relating to the Maltese Order. His murderers did not leave him time to convert his words into deeds. Prussia was reminded by Talleyrand that it had nothing to do with Italy; and Rome was told how unseemly it was for her to beg favours of all the non-Catholic Powers, while she must be perfectly well aware that of all the Catholic states France was the only one interested in the maintenance of the temporal power. Even before Lunéville, and still more when the treaty of February 9th had placed the much-coveted pledge of the Legations in his hands, the First Consul held out hopes which he never intended to gratify. Spina was duped, and wrote to Consalvi on the 20th of February, 1801, that, if the necessary powers were sent him, he hoped to bring the matter of the Legations to a successful conclusion. Consalvi sent him the powers; but he was too shrewd and experienced to interpret

the assurance of the First Consul, "that he wished to be the Carlo Magno of the Church," in as favourable a sense for Rome as Spina had done. Although he never ceased to demand the return of the lost territory, he soon arrived at the conviction that a Napoleonic Empire was impending, and that it aimed at nothing more or less than the possession of the whole of Italy: "e poi addio le Legazioni," he complained to those diplomatists, the English and the Russian envoys, who shared his opinion. In the course of the long dispute Talleyrand rendered the Papacy the only service which a man holding his views could render her—he never deceived her.

The treaty of Tolentino, and consequently the abandonment of the Legations, was the basis from which he started, and neither in his instructions to the French envoy Cacault nor in his reports to the First Consul did he ever depart from it. France, he was never weary of repeating, was the only Power which was willing to assure the Papacy an independent political existence, provided that the latter in its turn gave up all intrigue with foreign Powers and renounced all claims of a religious nature which were no longer compatible with the political rights of nations. As regards the terms of this religious understanding his standpoint was not less clearly defined. The Concordat for him never meant anything more than an unavoidable concession on the part of philosophy to the

principles of toleration and freedom of individual opinion. The Revolution, he says, had not enlightened the people sufficiently, and philosophy had not proved strong enough, to enable them to dispense with a form of worship. This proposition once granted, the establishment of the Catholic religion, as that of a majority of Frenchmen, was inevitable. More than this Talleyrand was not prepared to concede.

When Spina, however, arrived in Paris in November 1800, his instructions were to insist on the Catholic religion being declared the dominant one in France. The First Consul appeared to regard this demand as a mere matter of form. Spina met with no serious resistance, and expected a speedy termination of the negotiations by the end of December. Then an event suddenly happened which changed everything. The explosion of the infernal machine was described by Fouché as an act of vengeance on the part of the Jacobins for the First Consul's friendly attitude towards the Church. The idea of a reconciliation with the Church was just as odious to the officers of the republican armies, and a conspiracy against the life of the First Consul was discovered, which threw suspicion at first on Moreau and drew attention to the Royalist conspiracies which were hatching in England. In consequence of what had taken place, Bernier, who was negotiating with Spina on behalf of the French government, was instructed by the latter to state that

it adhered to all its demands, but declined to proclaim the Catholic religion as the dominant one, and that it could only be styled the religion professed by the majority of Frenchmen. Spina was bitterly disappointed, and referred to the "politique infernale" of the Paris government: Consalvi replied in a not less excited strain on the 7th of February, 1801, saying that this article was the ruin of the whole scheme—"crolla tutto l'edifizio"—and four separate drafts of a Concordat were rejected in Rome. Talleyrand now for the first time, after the conclusion of peace with Austria at Lunéville, interfered directly in the negotiations. He first of all endeavoured, as he had done shortly before with Count St.-Julien, to bully Spina into signing a new draft, the fifth in number. When Spina refused on the ground that he was not empowered to do so, Talleyrand rejoined that in that case he considered the Archbishop's mission to Paris as a mere trap, and that it was unnecessary for him to prolong his stay there. But neither the First Consul nor the Minister was seriously afraid of a rupture, for with the left bank of the Rhine and the Legations they held the hostages which compelled Rome to give way. The First Consul, Talleyrand now declared, did not aim at the establishment of an ultramontane Church nor at the revival of ignorance, fanaticism, and superstition; he wished to revert to the maxims of Bossuet, to the traditions and liberties of the Gallican Church. This

train of thought led to the drafting of the organic articles by which the French jurists Crétet and Portalis defined the authority of the State in the Concordat as that of the absolute monarchy. Subsequently, after the rupture with Rome, Napoleon once more reverted to the Gallican tradition, and endeavoured to play off the national Church against Rome. But in the year 1801 the national Church stood between him and power, and he therefore demanded from Pius VII. the unconditional deposition of the eighty-one survivors of the one hundred and thirty French bishops who since 1791 had endured poverty and persecution out of loyalty to the Romish See.

The first impression which this request produced in Rome was one of panic. The Papacy had to reckon not only with the French Royalists, but with the Catholic world itself; and the latter, according to Cardinal Maury, held that the demand compromised the whole Catholic episcopate. The Pope's apprehensions of a schism were well founded, and subsequently, as is well known, the Papacy could not prevent the bishops, who took refuge in England, Talleyrand's uncle among them, from withholding their resignation and forming the so-called *Petite Église*.

For months and months, up to the time when compliance was regularly forced upon them, Pius VII. and Consalvi repeated over and over again that the Pope could for the sake of peace invite the bishops to resign,

but that he had no power to compel them to do so. We are just as good theologians as the Romans, was Talleyrand's rejoinder; the Pope fails to understand his position, in regard to which nothing is settled; even his election can be contested, for it took place under the auspices of only one of the Powers. If he declines to appoint an entirely new episcopate, we shall reply by breaking off negotiations. "This," as Consalvi rightly says, "was conceding Rome a power which shattered once and for all the colossus of Gallican privilege." While the First Consul was forcing Rome to destroy the pre-revolutionary episcopate, because it consisted of Royalists, Talleyrand asked the Pope to convey a retrospective sanction to the secularisation of the property of the French Church, and pressed the First Consul to treat the German ecclesiastical property on the left bank of the Rhine in the same manner. "Déposséder les établissements religieux," he wrote quite in the spirit of 1789, "c'ést approprier leurs biens et les faire entrer dans le système de la propriété." To Rome he wrote: "Les difficultés que le Saint-Siège se fait et nous fait à cet égard sont des chimères. L'Église a été dépouillée dans tous les siècles, et les spoliateurs n'ont été punis que quand ils étaient faibles. Le traité de Westphalie a sécularisé la moitié des biens ecclésiastiques de l'Allemagne, et la cour de Rome n'a pas excommunié l'Empire."

On the 19th of May the ultimatum embodying

the above demands and fixing five days as the term for compliance was despatched to Rome. At the suggestion of the French envoy Cacault, who had already been recalled, Consalvi made a rapid journey to Paris, and arrived there unexpectedly on the 20th of June. He was considered the real instigator of the opposition which the First Consul had met with in Rome, and he now came, nominally to secure better terms, but in reality to avert the threatened rupture by means of concessions, the extent of which he kept secret for the present. "On prétend que je suis dévot," he said at his first meeting with Talleyrand: "il n'en est rien, j'aime le plaisir tout comme un autre;" explaining this by a reference to the pleasure which theatres and concerts gave him. We abide by the ultimatum, was Talleyrand's answer, and on the 28th of June he sent Consalvi a new draft of a Concordat, the seventh in number, and left the same evening for the baths of Bourbon l'Archambault. "To get a good Secretary of State in Rome you must take a bad Cardinal," he used to say jokingly afterwards. Consalvi, Spina, and Bernier breathed again. The signing of the Concordat in the night of July 15th-16th was attributed by Consalvi to the absence of the "potente avversario." His triumph was premature, and he was destined once more to feel Talleyrand's power.

A Genoese lady of high rank, the Marquise Brignole,

was living in Paris, who was on friendly terms both with the First Consul and Consalvi, and the latter's confidante in the Concordat negotiations. To her Consalvi made no secret of his delight that Rome had got off comparatively cheaply, "for," he added, "my instructions empowered me to go much further." The purport of this confidential conversation came to the ears of the First Consul on the following morning through Sémonville. He listened attentively, and then said: "I knew this perfectly well, but what use would it have been to me? When once I had decided to re-establish the Catholic religion, I was bound to wish to see it honoured and respected. If, instead of pursuing this policy, I had insisted on concessions of too extensive a nature, I should have deprived the Pope and the Church of their dignity. France has a different idea of Catholicism, and would have despised a Concordat of that kind."

Sémonville at first took Consalvi's remark to mean that he had been empowered to approve the marriage of the clergy. But this was a mistake. Consalvi was only authorised to legalise the position of married priests by an article in the Concordat itself, and Talleyrand's draft of June 28th contained a similar provision. But it had disappeared from the text of the Concordat.

In the evening of July 26th, a few hours before Consalvi's departure for Rome, Talleyrand returned to Paris. A report of his to the First Consul bearing

the same date complains that in the arrangement made with Rome "a personal confession of faith is required from members of the government, that the old oath required from the clergy is re-inserted, that excessive facilities are conceded for ecclesiastical foundations, and, finally, that the provisions relating to the constitutional clergy and to priests who had become laymen by marriage or by voluntary secession from the Church had not been inserted in the text." The Concordat was not yet ratified, and the two last points, the only important ones as to which Talleyrand had not had his own way, might still be amended. Up to the 20th of July the Papal plenipotentiaries had indulged in the belief that the First Consul would adhere to his decision to sacrifice the French clergy. On that day he announced to the astonished plenipotentiaries that seven or eight of the constitutional bishops must be appointed to the new episcopate, a course of action which had been decided on by him and Talleyrand since the 25th of March. Consalvi knew quite well from what quarter the blow came: "I principali fra i ministri," he wrote regarding the constitutional bishops to Rome, "sono i loro acerrimi sostenitori, e il Primo Console si e messo interamente nelle loro braccia." The settlement of this question and that of the married priests was to be dealt with by a Papal Bull. Consalvi's last hope was that the Pope might succeed in making the

appointment of the constitutional schismatics and the reconciliation of the married monks and priests with the Church conditional on a solemn retractation. He reckoned once more without Talleyrand. "If the Bull and the Breves which accompany it," wrote the latter to Cacault on the 3rd of August, "contain the slightest offensive allusion to Frenchmen who have endeavoured to combine their duty as priests with their duty as citizens, the French government will refuse to ratify the convention." As in January and in May, so on this occasion also Rome resigned itself to the inevitable, and on the 29th of August Talleyrand was able to report to the First Consul: "Le Saint-Siège a sanctionné, sans aucune restriction substantielle, le résultat des négociations de ses ministres. . . . Le Saint-Père a fait au-delà de ce que ses ministres avaient promis; il a donné le nom d'évêques et d'archevêques aux titulaires du clergé constitutionnel." The only matter in which Talleyrand was disappointed was the Breve relating to the married priests. It referred to "mulieribus corruptis"; but there was no time to correct the expression, which he criticises as untranslatable. In the meanwhile he had to content himself with preventing the document from being published. At the First Consul's special request Pius VII. secularised "his beloved son Charles Maurice Talleyrand" by special Breve on the 29th of July, 1802. The Pope remarked to Consalvi,

speaking of the ex-bishop: "Ah, ah, que Dieu ait son âme, mais moi je l'aime beaucoup." Nor had he reason to complain of him. After all the concessions that had been wrung from it, the Papacy gained more than it lost. The settlement of 1801 completed what had been begun in 1789, and from the ruins of the imposing and venerable Gallican Church rose the universal monarchy of the Papacy, which was completed in 1870.

For this result Talleyrand is far more responsible than Napoleon, for he knew much better than the latter, who had only political aims in view, what the loss was, and was well aware that the Nemesis of history and its great catastrophes are invariably provoked by those who commit injustice for the sake of some object of the moment, and sacrifice the most precious possessions of mankind to the ephemeral interests of the day. The parties to the Concordat were destined to experience the truth of this. So far as it was a measure of conciliation, it has proved durable, for it brought with it religious peace, the restoration of which was an act of true wisdom and imperious necessity. But both parties in signing it had secondary views and hopes of their own, which in course of time produced discord instead of harmony between them. Napoleon seized on the temporal power, which the Pope had hoped to save by the alliance with him. And the authority of the Church

revolted against the omnipotent State, which had placed her on such a pinnacle of greatness, and then thought to make of her a willing tool, "une gendarmerie sacrée," as an Imperial historian expresses it. The conflict had fatal results for both sides. It exhausted the strength of the Napoleonic empire, but it also drove the Papacy into an alliance with absolute governments, which bound it hand and foot to reaction for many years to come.

Talleyrand took no part in these disputes. It was not without a deliberate purpose that Napoleon conferred on him the principality of Benevento at the Pope's expense in 1806, before he resigned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Pius VII. met with him again as Minister of Louis XVIII. The Charter of 1814 conceded the point which had threatened to prove fatal to the Concordat, Article VI. declaring the Catholic religion to be that of the State. "Do you know," said Prince Talleyrand to the Duchess de Duras in 1818, in the course of an excited political discussion, "do you know who inserted these words in the Charter?" "No, I do not," replied the Duchess, "but they are excellent words, whoever put them in." "I put them in," interrupted Talleyrand, "and for this reason, because they mean nothing at all (parce qu'ils ne signifient rien du tout)."

Talleyrand was reconciled with the Pope; he was now married by the First Consul. An odour of court

life was already spreading in Paris; the free and easy days of the Directory were a thing of the past; the path to marriage lay once more through the Church, and the ladies of the *corps diplomatique* objected to leave the presence of Joséphine in order to be presented to Madame Grand. The latter saw her opportunity, obtained an audience of the First Consul by working on his easily moved consort, and threw herself at his feet in a flood of tears. Talleyrand received twenty-four hours in which to make up his mind. One of the domestic scenes which he dreaded above all things proved decisive, and on the 10th of September, 1803, Admiral Bruix, Roederer, Sainte-Foy, Beurnonville, and the German Prince of Nassau-Siegen officiated as witnesses of the civil marriage, to which the *curé* of Épinay gave his benediction in his little village church on the following day. Talleyrand repaid Joséphine for her interference by supporting Napoleon's plans for a divorce in 1807 and 1809. Opinions were divided as to his marriage. M. Grand accepted a money *solatium*. A clever woman of the world, Madame de Rémusat, who had just become lady-in-waiting at the Tuileries, and had begun to study Talleyrand with friendly curiosity, regretted the step as having "cost him the Romish purple and with it his title to general respect." Talleyrand himself alleviated his lot by sending to England for Charlotte, the little daughter of a friend who had entrusted her to Talley-

rand on his death-bed, and bringing her up in his own house. The children's balls which he gave, and which he made interesting for grown-up persons by engaging the first artists of the day, such as Talma, Madame Grassini, and Crescentini, became famous in their way. He afterwards married the young girl to one of his cousins.

His civil and social status was placed on a proper footing, and his peace made with the Church. The statesman had now to address himself to the great problem of his diplomatic career—an understanding with England.

CHAPTER XIII.

TIMES OF PEACE.

1802.

IF Talleyrand had preserved any illusions as to the aims of the policy to which he had devoted himself, the treaty of Lunéville would have sufficed to destroy them. Everything which he had described as obsolete, out of date, and untenable in his memorandum to Lebrun and in his state-papers of 1796—the irreconcilable hostility to England, the doctrine of natural frontiers, and, far worse than these, the system of progressive conquests, the tactics of the Convention and the committee of public safety, the schemes of Sieyès and the strategy of the Directory—all reappeared in the treaties which the *raison d'état* of the Consulate dictated to its vanquished enemies. The same Minister for Foreign Affairs who had resigned his office in 1799 with a crushing indictment of the government of the Directory, found himself in 1801 in the singular position of having to support a policy which transferred dynasties, parcelled out

territory, exchanged countries, and erected the right of the stronger on the ruins of the old law of Europe. If in spite of this Talleyrand was its pliant instrument, it is only fair to remember that, just as Frenchmen had joined in conspiring with him on the 18th of Brumaire, so in the present case he had ministers and cabinets for his accomplices. For the space of eight years the Continental powers had, under the pretext of a war of principles against the Revolution, brought countries to the hammer and disposed of nationalities to the highest bidder. Russia set up the market of the first coalition in Poland; that of the second was transferred to Italy by Austria; and people lived to see the day when the schemes for monarchical restoration for which England subsidised Imperial armies were opposed by the Emperor's Ministers as contrary to Austrian interests, and the schismatic Tsar defended the temporal power of the Pope against the encroachments of Catholic Powers. The peace of Lunéville was a mere episode in the history of these usurpations, by means of which monarchs vied with the leaders of the Revolution in upsetting the old order of things in Europe. This order had passed away for ever, as Hauterive declared in his paper above mentioned, which was interpreted as the opinion of the French Foreign Office, and a new one had not yet come into being. In the meanwhile there was nothing to do but to wait and, above all, to last. What was im-

possible one day might succeed the next. But a surprise was in store for these tactics, which are those of all opportunists.

A few weeks before the violent end of the Tsar hostility to England seemed to have reached its furthest limits. The coasts of Europe were either closed or on the point of being closed to her; she was confronted with a powerful league, and as isolated as France at the outbreak of the war of the first coalition. This was the state of affairs when, at the end of January 1802, Pitt fell, as English Ministers generally do, on the Irish question. He thought the hour for Catholic emancipation had come, while the old King, whose mind once more gave way during the crisis, refused it on conscientious grounds. Pitt's administration had lasted for seventeen years, and the formation of a government by the Opposition, with Fox as Premier, was out of the question, as the party numbered barely sixty. Addington, the *protégé* and friend of Pitt, "un homme de rien," as the French plenipotentiary's despatches style him, became Prime Minister, and with the exception of the religious question the programme of the government remained the same. A fleet under Admiral Keith conveyed an English army to Egypt. Nelson and Parker appeared with another at Copenhagen, and fought the sanguinary battle which ended with a victory for Nelson and with the truce which broke up the league of

the neutrals. England could now renew her overtures for peace under far more favourable circumstances than at Lille in 1797. They were transmitted by the French diplomatist Otto, who had been for some time in London on business connected with the exchange of prisoners. Lord Grenville's successor, Lord Hawkesbury, proposed the despatch of plenipotentiaries, declared that England would refrain from attacking the existing French government in the future, and remarked in the course of conversation that the most influential personages among the surroundings of the First Consul were working for peace. The latter understood who was meant by this. "Tell M. Otto," he wrote to Talleyrand, "that insinuations of this kind are idle talk." You must inform this Lord Hawkesbury, he went on, that the Cabinet is united, that we fear nobody, neither England nor Russia, nor impotent conspirators, and that we shall only sign an honourable peace based on equality of power between both nations by land and by sea.

These instructions signified, in other words, that the result of the expedition against Portugal was to be awaited, which France and Spain had agreed to carry out by the treaty of January 29th, and which, if successful, would deprive England of her most important point of support in southern Europe. Bonaparte had already written to Talleyrand on the 30th of the preceding September that a serious

menace to Portugal would make England inclined for peace. The King and Queen of Spain had only consented to make war on their own children on condition of Godoy's recall, for the Queen's favourite daughter was married to the Regent of Portugal. When the latter refused to part from England, the mock campaign began on the 20th of May, which ended a few days after in her defeat. But on this occasion the victorious Godoy revealed his own utter incapacity and the lamentable decline of Spain's military power to the French auxiliary corps; he even ventured to evade the conditions of peace prescribed by the French Republic by concluding one on his own terms. France had demanded the occupation of some Portuguese provinces as a hostage for compelling England to surrender the islands of Trinidad, Malta, and Minorca, conquered by her. Godoy, instead of following this course, guaranteed the integrity of Portugal by the treaty of Badajoz, and contented himself with her abandonment of the English alliance and with the cession of Olivenza.

The state of things in Spain had long inspired the First Consul with the profoundest contempt. It was in vain that he forced the Spanish fleet by treaty to co-operate with the French; as soon as their ships ventured out of port they were captured by the English, who sailed unharmed through the Straits of Gibraltar and held the whole hostile force at bay with a few frigates. In February Bonaparte sent word to Madrid

through Talleyrand that something should be done to prevent Spain, who had been once so powerful, from sinking into the lowest rank among the nations of the world. His wrath with the incapable King, with Godoy, and his brother Lucien, who was French ambassador in Madrid, knew no bounds when he heard of the treaty with Portugal,—"the most serious blow," as he called it, "which had befallen his administration," and which he refused to ratify. When the Prince de la Paix, dazzled by the apparent success of the "guerre des oranges," demanded the withdrawal of the French troops, and made the ambassador in Paris, Azara, use insulting language, the First Consul retorted by asking whether their Catholic Majesties were tired of being on the throne. If Godoy, "ce misérable," as he called him without further ado, was going to take up a hostile attitude, then the last hour of the Monarchy had arrived, and the change would come like a thunder-clap.

Talleyrand was at the baths of Bourbon l'Archambault, undergoing a cure. On the 2nd of July he reported from there on Spanish affairs, indulged in the conjecture that Godoy had been bribed by England, but gave the dispute a different turn by suggesting that, instead of proceeding against Spain, "ce triste allié," as the First Consul threatened to do, France should dispose of the island of Trinidad, which belonged to her. If this plan were adopted, it would be advisable to

accelerate the negotiations in London and send a conciliatory reply to Madrid in order to gain time. The report concluded as follows: "Voilà le moment où je m'aperçois bien que depuis deux ans je ne suis plus accoutumé à penser seul; ne pas vous voir laisse mon esprit et mon imagination sans guide . . . je ne suis pas complet loin de vous." Nevertheless, it was his policy that was carried out at Amiens, the First Consul roundly declaring that, even if Spain withheld her consent, he would cede Trinidad without it. The ambassador Azara, who was a personal friend of Talleyrand's, was wise enough not to make any ineffectual resistance at Amiens. Portugal bore the brunt of the punishment in the loss of Guiana, the conclusion of a treaty of commerce, and the payment of twenty-five millions. But Spain was really the greatest sufferer, for she had revealed the whole depth of her abasement to her allies, whose hand was heavier on her than that of any enemy.

Talleyrand was now within measurable distance of the goal on which his face had always been set—peace with England, for which the First Consul himself was now anxious. For not only had Spain not conquered Portugal; Egypt was as good as lost to France. Cairo capitulated in June, and Alexandria, blockaded by the English and the Turks by sea and land, was on the point of falling. The exchange of proposals and views which had been going on between Otto and

Lord Hawkesbury since May brought the preponderance gained by England into clear relief. She could, as actually did happen, afford to part with some of her conquests; but she was secure against hostile attack. On the other hand, the continental acquisitions of the French Republic were, after Lunéville just as much as after Campo Formio, the precarious result of military success: a single defeat, and the whole position was compromised. It was precisely the conviction of this fact which was destined to confirm the First Consul more and more in his antagonism to the only Power which lay beyond his reach. Up to September he took refuge in delay, raised difficulties and threatened to invade England; it was not till he saw the necessity of counteracting the inevitable fall of Alexandria that he urged his Minister to come to terms. The preliminaries of peace were signed in London on the 1st of October, and constituted in all essential points the basis of the treaty of Amiens. France made peace at the expense of her allies, Spain having to cede Trinidad, and Holland Ceylon, to England, who restored all her other conquests, and agreed to surrender Malta to the Order of the Knights of St. John. The Porte received Egypt, and was guaranteed the integrity of its territory; that of Portugal was guaranteed in the same way, and the republic of the Ionian Islands obtained recognition. France withdrew her troops from the States of the

Church and from the kingdom of Naples. A few days after the preliminaries had been signed the news of the surrender of Alexandria, which had taken place on the 30th of August, arrived, and with this episode the dream of Napoleon's Eastern policy came to an end. Joseph Bonaparte, who was the official negotiator for France at Lunéville, acted in the same capacity at Amiens. "I believe it would kill me if we failed this time," wrote Talleyrand, in a rare access of impulsiveness. In the despatches which were exchanged between him and Joseph during a period of nearly six months Malta formed the principal subject of negotiation. According to the first proposals of the French Naples, according to those of the English Russia, was to undertake the protectorate of the island. At last it was agreed to place it under the guarantee of the six Powers, England, France, Austria, Russia, Spain, and Prussia. In the meanwhile the treaties of October 8th and 10th were concluded with Russia, which proved that the change of government in St. Petersburg was in no way detrimental to France. Paul's ambassador Kalitscheff, a violent opponent of France, had carried out his master's despotic orders with such offensive arrogance that Talleyrand declined to receive his last despatches, and a rupture would have been inevitable if the young Emperor Alexander had not replaced Kalitscheff by Markoff, and adopted a very different tone from that of his father. He gave up the

dignity of Grand Master of the Maltese Order, consented to Talleyrand's proposal that Sardinia's indemnity should be settled by both Powers "de gré à gré," having regard to existing circumstances, in other words, agreed to Piedmont becoming French and recognised the usurpations in Italy, while England made its recognition of them conditional on an equivalent being provided for the King of Sardinia in Italy. Ranke lays great stress on the provisions of the Russo-French treaties, which were aimed at the *émigrés* on the one hand and the Poles on the other, and frustrated England's supposed plan of appointing a Bourbon Grand Master of the Maltese Order by excluding Englishmen and Frenchmen. On the other hand France did not succeed in obtaining the expulsion of the Bourbons from the English Ministry or a renunciation of the throne from Louis XVIII., although Talleyrand endeavoured, on the instructions of the First Consul, to procure both, the last by the intervention of the Prussian government, which had granted the exile a refuge at Warsaw. Such a renunciation, he remarked to Markoff, could never be binding according to the laws of the old Monarchy, but the monarch who would stoop to make it would be lost. Louis XVIII. refused, and the maintenance of his claim was the moral force which always to a certain extent disturbed Napoleon's repose. His remarks to Gaudin are one among many instances of this: "I do not question

the benefit of a sincere and durable peace for a firmly-established state; I only ask myself whether the foundations of our own are sufficiently solid to enable us to dispense with victory. . . . You must bear in mind that a First Consul is not like a king by the grace of God, who regards his kingdom as his hereditary property. . . . There is always a state of war prevailing between the old monarchies and a young republic. This is what lies at the root of the disputes in Europe."

Subject to the continuance of this misunderstanding, for it is not in mortal power to compose irreconcilable differences, the treaty of Amiens, concluded on the 25th of March, 1802, gave Europe eighteen months of peace. The Chancellor Pasquier reports Napoleon's remark to Talleyrand: "Eh bien! nous voilà dans de beaux draps; la paix est faite." Talleyrand himself gives another version of the incident in his Memoirs. On the day when the anxiously awaited courier arrived, the Minister went as usual to the First Consul, worked with him, and, when they had finished their business, took the treaty out of his pocket, saying, "Here is something that will please you; look at this!" "And you did not tell me of it at once!" said the astonished Bonaparte. "Certainly not, for you would have listened to nothing I had to say: quand vous êtes heureux vous n'êtes pas abordable." Everything had not passed off smoothly between them in this respect.

The Memoirs contain the following passage relating to the treaty and Bonaparte's demands: "Il détestait de m'entendre dire que j'aurais volontiers laissé Malte aux Anglais en toute propriété, pourvu que le traité eût été signé par Mr. Pitt ou par Mr. Fox, au lieu de l'être par Mr. Addington." The meaning of the remark is that neither Pitt, who had given the Ministry active assistance in the settlement of the preliminaries, nor Fox, who was now as enthusiastic an admirer of the First Consul as he had been a few years before of the Revolution, would have concluded a treaty on such a precarious basis. The former would have made less and the latter greater concessions, and both would have brought clearness into the situation. Addington, on the other hand, not only believed in Napoleon's sincerity, but in the possibility of a final reconciliation between the two nations. Talleyrand, however, did not share the views of Fox or Addington, but those of Pitt. He saw clearly what mischief would result if the power of the man who was indispensable to France could not be limited in Europe and especially in Italy, where the First Consul, by reviving the Cisalpine Republic created at Campo Formio, obtained control over a state which had not a shadow of real independence. Talleyrand's first attempt to prevent this usurpation took place in April 1801, immediately after Lunéville, and with the approval, not only of Cobenzl, but also of Joseph Bonaparte. He

pointed out then what difficulties had been experienced in founding the Batavian, the Ligurian, the Roman, and the Parthenopean republics, and how impolitic it would be to add to the satellites of the French Republic by creating another of the same kind. Instead of doing this the First Consul had better make some prince President of the Cisalpine Republic, a Hapsburger for instance, like the ex-Grand Duke of Tuscany. By this means Austria would henceforth be bound over to keep the peace, and Germany would be relieved from the necessity of indemnifying the dispossessed sovereign at her own expense. He repeatedly reverted to this project, and even in July the Emperor Alexander regarded it with favour. The First Consul, however, had other ends in view. To him an Italian kingdom was a *sine qua non* for the foundation of that empire, to which he referred this very year in a despatch to Otto as the design which now stood clearly outlined before him.

Before the conclusion of the treaties with Russia he was prepared to purchase Austria's consent to the annexation of Piedmont by cessions of territory; after they were signed he declared that he could dispense with the approval of the Vienna Cabinet, as well as that of England, for the changes contemplated in Italy. When Joseph was appointed plenipotentiary at Amiens Talleyrand was sensible of his intention to curtail his own influence on the negotiations, and betrayed an

irritability which his diplomatic colleagues took a malicious pleasure in noticing. In December he was ordered to proceed to Lyons, to discuss with the Cisalpine deputies the constitution which had been planned for them in Paris, and so give his sanction to the scheme to which he had raised such emphatic objections. Roederer, who had prepared the draft with the aid of Maret, handed it to the Minister with the remark that a constitution should be short and—he was going to add "clear," when Talleyrand interrupted him with the words, "Oui, courte et obscure." At Lyons he met his friend Melzi, afterwards Duke of Lodi and Vice-President of Cisalpina. In the Memoirs he states that he confided his views to him and indicated to him the best means of attaining the objects, not of the First Consul, but of the Italians. These were the tactics by which he used to try to control the policy of Napoleon, when it escaped his direct influence, and which afterwards, notably at Erfurt, were stigmatised as treachery. In Lyons, at all events, they did not go beyond a timid attempt, for while he was giving this advice to the Italians, the First Consul was receiving letters from Lyons in which his Minister assured him that a re-modelling of the constitution was out of the question, that he had taken good care of this, and had so arranged matters that Bonaparte's slightest wish would be regarded as law by the deputies. A President had onw to be appointed. The Consulta proposed

Melzi; Talleyrand hinted in a moment of enthusiasm that they might make a better choice, and shortly after the First Consul's arrival in Lyons he was acclaimed President of the state now designated as the Italian Republic.

In December the little state of Lucca received a ready-made constitution from Paris; in June 1802 the Republic of Genoa was treated in the same way; the kingdom of Tuscany was entirely dependent on France; in August Elba became French, and on the 4th of September Piedmont, which had long been practically annexed, was transformed into a French province. Treaties with the Porte, with Algiers and Tunis, and with Bavaria, which thus reverted to its old relations with France, had already been signed by Talleyrand in the autumn of 1801. In his Memoirs he lays stress on his endeavour in the treaty of Amiens to promote, if only "in a philosophical fashion," one of his favourite schemes—the civilisation of Africa. The reinstated Knights of St. John were in a state of war with the Moors, and their ports, which were declared neutral by treaty, still remained closed to the Moorish vessels. Talleyrand's idea was to make northern Africa, if need be by force of arms, come to an understanding with the Christian Powers of the Mediterranean, and employ the available troops belonging to the Egyptian expedition for this purpose, instead of, as actually took place, in the re-conquest of St. Domingo. "The conquest

of the African coast," he says, "would have remedied the mischief in Europe, and given a practical application to my philosophy." Napoleon availed himself of the benefit of Talleyrand's advice, but took his own line. The proclamation for the commemoration of Brumaire 18th, in which he announced the expedition to St. Domingo, paraphrased the well-known passage from Talleyrand's paper on the advantages of colonies: "S'il reste encore des hommes que tourmente le désir de haïr leurs concitoyens, ou qu'aigrisse le souvenir de leurs pertes, d'immenses contrées les attendent; qu'ils osent aller y chercher des richesses, et l'oubli de leurs infortunes et de leurs peines. Les regards de la patrie les y suivront; elle secondera leur courage." When the army of the Rhine, whose republican traditions were distasteful to him, nearly perished in St. Domingo, the First Consul was suspected of having planned their destruction. Even Lanfrey acquits him of this. But the law which made success the *sine qua non* of his political existence was broken in this case, and St. Domingo is one of the links in the chain of causes which led to the rupture with England.

In the meanwhile Talleyrand enjoyed the only period of rest which was vouchsafed to him during his official career under Napoleon. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Paris and his country-house at Neuilly were the rendez-vous of European diplomatists, and of the cosmopolitan society which had collected

in the French capital after the peace. When Fox went to Paris in August 1802, he found Talleyrand's house fitted up entirely in the style before the Revolution, except that the servants wore no liveries, while Madame Talleyrand was waited on by Orientals, who burnt incense before her when she came into the *salon*. The attitude of the master of the house was perfectly correct. Roederer is the last person who records a frivolous anecdote of his. Madame de Rémusat, it is true, states that it was Talleyrand who in 1807 drew Napoleon's attention to a handsome Italian lady, who re-appeared at the court in Fontainebleau. The tone of hostility to religion, from which he was not quite free in his youth, he afterwards considered the most despicable form of vulgarity. When his friend Montrond was on his death-bed and the priest asked him if he had ever scoffed at religion, the answer was, "Never. I have always lived in good society." Rivarol's saying, "l'impiété est une indiscrétion," would have been endorsed by Talleyrand. His remark that "he would know how to avoid giving offence" was a guide for the latter part of his life. Schulenburg, Gagern, Madame de Rémusat, and Lord Brougham all testify that they never heard him utter a word derogatory to religion. The only exception is given by Vitrolles, who says that Talleyrand remarked in 1815, "Que voulez-vous? Il n'y a plus de religion en France?" when some one expressed surprise in his

presence that no Jacques Clément could be found to rid the world of Napoleon. Bourrienne's assertion that it was impossible to have anything to do with Talleyrand without liking him perhaps deserves little credit; but even Senfft and Gagern praise his unpretending amiability and his consideration for others, his equability, which was never ruffled by ill-temper and not even by impatience, and his disposition, which was capable of warm affection and required it from others. Madame de Rémusat adds some darker lines to the picture, and calls him "le personnage le plus factice," without illusions and without enthusiasm, indifferent even in matters which concerned himself; Pasquier goes farther, and attributes his inability to resent an injury to an absence of all delicacy of feeling. As a statesman Talleyrand deceived even men who thought they knew him well by an apparent calm and an apathy of manner which concealed great abilities and, in spite of all the changes that were forced upon him, a dogged adherence to his own views. He advised the diplomatists of the Continent, who came to Paris in 1802 in a state of nervous excitement, to be more calm: "La plupart des choses se font en ne les faisant pas," he said to Gagern. "Vous êtes toujours s angoissé, si pressé," he remarked to the Swiss envoy Stapfer; "le temps est un grand moyen de salut, il guérit et arrange tout, laissez-le faire un peu.' Wessenberg records the following: "Le seul bon

principe est de n'en avoir aucun." Savary was advised by Talleyrand to learn a great deal by asking few questions. He was now close on fifty, and while he preserved the powdered peruke and the manners of the *ancien régime*, he shared the revolutionary generation's power of assimilating the ideas which the future has since transmuted into practice. Of all the statesmen of the coming Restoration period Talleyrand is probably the one whom the political evolutions of the nineteenth century would have found least out-of-date and best qualified to adapt himself to the new conditions of existence imposed by democracy; for this reason, among others, that he did not occupy a higher level than it, and was as much influenced by money considerations as modern society generally. The stigma which attached to his name under the government of the Directory clung to him as Minister of Napoleon. He was known to be, if not venal, at all events still open to offers of money, and only too ready to accept large sums in return for diplomatic favours. "Je mange plus que je n'ai," he said to Roederer in 1802. The allowance which Napoleon made him did not cover the expenses of his establishment, which was on a princely scale, and was the scene of fêtes such as that given to the Infante of Parma, when night was turned into day and the garden decorated in the Florentine style. It is no excuse for Talleyrand that Lucien and Masséna were no honester than he

was, that he parted with his money as freely as he took it, or that the First Consul knew all about it. The latter is said to have thought of dismissing him at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1803, on hearing of an intrigue by which his Minister for Foreign Affairs had endeavoured to procure twelve millions from the Dutch government for the house of Orange-Nassau. But only Bourrienne fell into temporary disgrace then on account of some discreditable transaction. The Emperor said to Talleyrand some years afterwards: "Vous êtes riche; quand j'aurai besoin d'argent, j'aurai recours à vous. Voyons, la main sur la conscience, combien avez-vous gagné avec moi?" But he also lost money through the Emperor. The failure of the banker Simon, brought about by the continental blockade in 1810, cost him a million and a half, and Savary describes his position at that time as a most critical one; the Emperor came to his rescue by giving him more than a million for the Hotel Monaco. Talleyrand used to warn young men against gambling on the Bourse, saying that whenever he had speculated on the strength of hints from well-informed quarters, he had always lost so many millions.

In the year 1803 temptations were multiplied on all sides. Paris was the market in which the constitutions of the tributary states were manufactured and territories sold to the highest bidder. It was then that Gagern, when he saw foreign princes and ambassadors stooping to ingratiate themselves not only

with the little Charlotte but even with her lap-dog, congratulated himself on having escaped the old German penalty of dog-carrying. The German princes came first. After months of negotiation no agreement had been arrived at as regards the indemnity question between Austria and Prussia. The understanding between Russia and France was all the more marked. After the Peace of Amiens came the treaty of May 23rd, 1802, between France and Prussia, which decided the latter's claims on the principle advocated by Talleyrand in 1798, viz., her exclusion from the Rhine and from South Germany. His proposal to compass this object by the cession of Mecklenburg failed through the refusal of the Grand Dukes to consent to an exchange. All Haugwitz's and Luchesini's attempts to secure aggrandisement in Westphalia were frustrated by Talleyrand's objection that Prussia could not become a neighbour of Holland without endangering the peace of Europe. This had been the thin end of the wedge for French policy for years past, the point from which every lever was to be directed to the subversion of the power of England. The First Consul had not the slightest intention of breaking with these traditions of the Convention and the Directory. Shortly before Lunéville, where the Dutch were guaranteed their freedom and independence, he told Roederer that he would rather fight all the Powers of the Continent single-handed than give up

the Netherlands and the Rhine province and allow a prince of the House of Orange to return to the Hague: "Avoir un stathouder en Hollande, ce serait avoir un Bourbon au faubourg Saint-Antoine." Two years afterwards Luchesini wrote to Haugwitz that General Bonaparte told him that Prussia's policy inspired him with confidence from the moment when, abandoning all idea of a restoration, she consented to indemnify the Crown Prince of Orange at the expense of Germany. Closely connected with this policy was the decision to settle the future of the Dutch people by a constitution prepared in Paris. It received the honour of a *plébiscite*, which was controlled by French troops, and at which the silence of the majority was interpreted as their consent.

After this came the final settlement of the indemnities granted to Germany, and especially to Prussia, in return for their recognition of the new order of things in Italy. The extension of territory gave such complete satisfaction in Berlin that even the distrustful Luchesini, who had never ceased to warn his government of Napoleon, now referred to his own "political conversion." He expressly attributed the success of his mission to Talleyrand's conduct, and Haugwitz felt that the object of his ambition, a defensive alliance between France, Russia, and Prussia, was likely to be realised. Consequently, when Cambacérès, Talleyrand, and Roederer started the

movement the first result of which was to make the Consulate a life-office, and Luchesini reported to Berlin in July 1802 that Napoleon was thinking of founding a dynasty, Haugwitz gave a favourable reception to an eventuality for which he had been prepared for months past. His memorandum of May 21st, 1802, points out that the entry of the First Consul into the ranks of European sovereigns would be beneficial to Europe generally and promote the interests of Prussia and Russia in particular, and also prevent the dreaded *rapprochement* with Austria. The indemnities for Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Hesse, Baden and the House of Orange, which consisted of ecclesiastical property, were now fixed in concert with Russia, who was anxious to play the part of protector of the weaker states. Austria had to bear the whole brunt of the disappointment. The negotiations were kept a secret from her ambassador, Count Cobenzl, up to the last moment. Then, when Talleyrand threw the responsibility for what had happened on Russia, the Cabinet of Vienna appealed in vain to the Tsar at the eleventh hour, and the Emperor uttered a protest at Ratisbonne, where the representatives of the Empire returned "sincere thanks" for the intervention of the two foreign Powers, whose agreement Haugwitz described as "a political phenomenon," and adopted their proposals with immaterial modifications.

Austria and the dispossessed Grand Duke of Tuscany

had to be content with some Tyrolese bishopries, with Salzburg, Berchtesgaden, and a part of Eichstädt. The only bishop who escaped secularisation was the Elector and chancellor Dalberg, who was transferred from Mayence to Regensburg. Talleyrand took him under his special protection, and he in return devoted himself without reserve to Talleyrand's "genius," as he expressed it, and asked for "no greater title to fame than the regard of Bonaparte." The policy of this by no means harmless enthusiast, coupled with the disappearance of the ecclesiastical princes, marks the collapse of the old constitution of the Empire. Then came the triumph of the system, which Sieyès had expounded to the committee of safety in 1795 as the result of the labours of the Constituent Assembly and the necessary consequence of the theory of a balance of power in Europe, as understood by the Revolution. Talleyrand, who borrowed from this system the principle of secularisation and of strengthening the separate states of Germany under a French protectorate, never let himself be persuaded by Sieyès to make use of it for the purpose of propagating republicanism. On the contrary, his policy in Germany, as well as in France itself, was to improve her political stability by increasing the power of the sovereigns. Haugwitz, Luchesini, and Gagern, whose testimony is expressly quoted by Talleyrand, all took away the impression from these negotiations that the French Minister

wished to do Germany a good turn after his own fashion, and establish durable institutions within her borders. Their view is confirmed by a confidential letter from the Minister to the First Consul dated the 9th of August, 1803, in which Germany is compared with the Latin countries of Europe, much to the disadvantage of the latter. "The Court of Berlin," he writes, "deserves all praise, and so do the other Courts of the North generally. They are all characterised by intelligence, coolness, sound sense, and a correct appreciation of our power and the wisdom of our intentions. If you compare this state of things with what prevails in the South of Europe, you might think you were transported into another world and another century." This praise may sound rather dubious to the Germans of the present day. But in 1802 Talleyrand found only a collection of states, and not a nation, on the other side of the Rhine, and it happened to serve the purposes of the policy which he represented to indulge his own inclination and meet them in a conciliatory spirit. Historians who have thoroughly studied the time agree with the more moderate language of Häusser: "The First Consul had given the German Empire a whole year to set its house in order, and at the end of that time one fact only was placed beyond doubt, that the Empire was quite incompetent to do so."

On the other hand, Talleyrand ruthlessly sacrificed the

last institution connected with the past of the old Empire —the German Church. Not only in the Departments of the Rhine, where the Concordat of 1802 was published, but everywhere in Germany the secularised clergy fell into the state of twofold dependence which gradually made it look for support outside the national life. In this case too the Pope protested in vain, characteristically enough not to the Emperor but to the First Consul, against the policy which gave the Protestant sovereigns the lion's share of Church property. But Pacca, formerly nuncio in Germany, was of a different opinion. Bearing in mind the stormy days of his mission to Cologne and the anti-Romish current of feeling among the German bishops in the eighties, he affirmed that the loss of their temporal possessions was after all no great misfortune for them, as by its means they were led from a state of almost schismatic independence back into the true fold of their spiritual pastor and master.

Talleyrand's share in the re-organisation of Switzerland belongs to this period. The treaty of Lunéville guaranteed the independence of Helvetia, but Napoleon had always kept the country in a state of dependence on France, which ensured strategical communication with Italy. In consequence of civil disturbances Geneva and Vaud became French in 1798; on the 30th of August, 1802, shortly after the First Consul had decided to withdraw his troops from Switzerland,

Valais was made a separate republic under French protection. But in October a fresh revolution in Berne furnished a welcome pretext for the re-entry of thirty thousand French soldiers under Ney. The First Consul, whose agents had not been idle spectators of the party struggles, now came forward as a mediating *deus ex machina*, and summoned the representatives of the various cantons to Paris, to discuss a new constitution for Switzerland. Talleyrand advised them, as he had formerly done with the Italians at Lyons, to frame it in accordance with national traditions, and by this means convince Europe that they did not wish their country to become a French province. The democratic Stapfer, who in 1801 called the First Consul "mad," and thought Talleyrand capable of bartering away the liberties of the country to the aristocratic federalists, was obliged to admit that he had formed an entirely wrong idea of the French Foreign Minister's views. After years of oppression and exactions on the part of foreign Powers, and of party squabbles and civil war at home, the mediation between the various factions undertaken by Talleyrand, Roederer, and Desmeuniers was a wise policy. But Talleyrand went even further. Luchesini states that he met the First Consul's plan of getting himself elected President of the Swiss Republic by sending in his resignation. In reply to this Bonaparte returned his Minister's first draft with the remark that he totally

disapproved of it, and set to work at framing a constitution himself: "C'est une tâche bien difficile pour moi de donner des constitutions à des contrées que je ne connais que très imparfaitement," he said to the Swiss deputies. "Si je ne réussis pas, je serai sifflé, et c'est ce que je ne veux pas." The act of mediation, however, was in accordance with Talleyrand's views, and not only sentimentalists like Bonstetten, but patriots of a ruder stamp like Hans von Reinhard, had no scruple in admitting that the Napoleonic régime, so long as it lasted, brought peace and prosperity to Switzerland.

As for liberty, hardly any one in France bestowed a thought upon it, so completely was it at the mercy of success. A few isolated speakers in the Tribunate regretted the issue of the experiment "which was to have made the French free citizens and left them as subjects." But the protest died away. The Senate placed its own interpretation on the constitution by striking inconvenient deputies off the lists, and found republicans like Carnot quite ready to take their place.

In questions of home policy Talleyrand's attitude was to outward appearances a passive one. Portalis and Crétet drew up the organic articles, and Fourcroy the scheme for the re-organisation of public instruction; but the plan on which they worked was that of the Bishop of Autun. Nor did he lose sight of finance. When Barbé-Marbois' want of skill and Ouvrard's speculations led to a banking crisis in the year 1805,

Talleyrand, who was at Munich, submitted a plan for re-organising the Institute, "the result of five-and-twenty years' observations," as he remarked. This piece of work gives him a place among the founders of the Bank of France.

Convictions were at a discount and interests at a premium. Liberty of the Press had a prominent place in Talleyrand's 1789 programme. But now he dissuaded people from making use of the Press. "You run the risk of being insulted," he said to Stapfer, "and, besides, I assure you that newspapers have no influence on the government." "Tell the Minister of Police," he wrote to d'Hauterive, "to keep the daily papers in their proper place, which is to report the incidents of foreign politics, but not to comment on them." It was Talleyrand who advised the First Consul to settle the most important questions, such as that of the amnesty and the duration of his term of office, by senatus-consulta, and not by legislation. Under the Empire he maintained that deliberative assemblies were quite incompatible with the French national character. "A quasi-representation for the purpose of voting the budget," as he wrote to Napoleon on the 8th of December, 1808, was all that he would allow his fellow-countrymen; novelties soon lost their attraction for them; and the Emperor should limit the powers of the legislative assembly and bring it into harmony with the monarchical system without com-

pletely abolishing it. He advised Miot de Melito, who went to Naples, not to meddle with existing institutions there and not to introduce a new constitution. As sick of theories as Napoleon himself, he spoke with disgust of "the great intellectual disorganisers," such as Necker, and met their doctrinaire criticism with the logic of facts and the prestige of success. Treaties with almost every European state, four constitutions for as many Italian governments, the founding of the three frontier republics of Holland, Switzerland, and Valais, which were dependent on France—this was Talleyrand's contribution to the work of peace of the years 1801—1802, a work which drew from the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs the plaintive warning that its results were more formidable and more menacing than war itself. Count Cobenzl was right. Before the treaty with England was a year old all who were in the secret were convinced that it was waste paper and that the peace of Europe was once more threatened. This was Talleyrand's last experience of peace as Minister of Napoleon, and in his Memoirs he marks the turning-point as follows: "La paix d'Amiens était à peine conclue que la modération commença à abandonner Bonaparte."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RUPTURE WITH ENGLAND AND THE MURDER OF THE DUKE OF ENGHIEN.

1802—1804.

IN his Memoirs Talleyrand specifies the annexation of Piedmont to France as the real cause of the rupture with England, who failed to obtain compensation for the King of Sardinia. Piedmont, he says, was Napoleon's first and his own conquest; for these reasons alone he considered it indispensable for his power in the future. But even without this breach of international law the Peace of Amiens would not have proved a lasting one. It had disappointed both of the contracting parties, and for months past recriminations and complaints had been made and returned on both sides. England had abandoned the independence of Holland, to maintain which she had engaged in a struggle of ten years' duration. When, on the 19th of February, 1803, the act of mediation placed Switzerland in a similar though less pronounced state of dependence on France, excitement in England rose to a height, and Napoleon retorted that he would not tolerate Switzerland being

made "a second Jersey," and the centre of every anti-French intrigue. This outburst revealed the cause of his ill-humour. On the 1st of June, 1802, Talleyrand had to point out that the despatch of a French ambassador to London was impossible as long as the English capital was the rendez-vous of Bourbon princes, recalcitrant bishops, and Royalist conspirators. Among the latter was Georges, who was convicted of open rebellion in 1800, implicated in the attempt of December 24th, and threatened with death by the First Consul. It stung the latter to the quick that pamphlets against him were printed under the very nose of the English government, and the most violent attacks of the Press tolerated, while the princes of the house of Bourbon who were in England were treated with royal honours. In August Fouché was ordered not to allow any English newspapers to come into France; Talleyrand recommended the circulation of the *Argus*, printed in France, as the only English paper which could be excepted: "Instruct citizen Otto," wrote Napoleon to his Minister, "to demand from Lord Hawkesbury the execution of the provisions of the treaty of Amiens which stipulate that neither State shall directly or indirectly extend its protection to those who endeavour to inflict injury on the other. . . . During the time when I looked through the letter-bag of the Foreign Office myself, I ascertained that you are officially informed on all the points of which I

endeavour to obtain cognisance in an indirect way. Send me the foreign newspapers which you receive by post." The princes were to have been sent to Warsaw, and Georges and the leaders of the Vendée insurrection to the colonies; but nothing was done, and, besides, public opinion in England would not stand compulsion. It was peculiarly alive to the injury which Napoleon's colonial policy threatened to inflict on English interests. In the autumn of 1802 the result of the St. Domingo expedition was still doubtful, the entry of French troops into Switzerland an accomplished fact, and Louisiana, which had been acquired by Spain, still in French hands. Political reasons were re-inforced by economical ones. English trade and industry had prospered during the war, and both had declined since the peace. The commercial treaty with France of 1786 had not been renewed, and high tariff kept English goods out of France and her dependent States. When the Addington Ministry protested in October 1802, a few weeks after the annexation of Piedmont, against the violation of Swiss neutrality by the French expedition under Ney, it knew that it was backed by an overwhelming majority of the nation. At the same time an English agent was despatched to Switzerland with instructions to offer the insurgents money whenever he found them determined on resistance.

This was the spark which caused the conflagration. Talleyrand had to send a despatch to Otto dictated

word for word, which is missing in Napoleon's correspondence, and marks the extreme limit reached by the Minister's pliability. England's threats, it began, far from arresting the First Consul in any course of action, would be quite sufficient to make him persist in it. He would never consent to surrender the Alps to fifteen hundred English mercenaries. Otto was not to utter the word "war," but meet any provocation thereto at once and in the haughtiest tone. No doubt could be entertained as to its result. Austria in her exhausted state, and Prussia and Bavaria, who had secured ample indemnities through French intervention, were no longer available for the English alliance, and a war on the Continent could only end in forcing France to conquer it. French trade, which had hardly revived, held out little hope of booty to the English on the high seas. Directly they blockaded the French coasts they would be blockaded themselves, and find the coastline of Europe, from North Germany and Flanders to Portugal and Otranto, occupied by French troops. The transports of Holland and Flanders would suffice to throw a hundred thousand men into England. Confronted with the horrors of invasion, she would end by provoking that very *Imperium Galliarum* which it had been her constant endeavour to prevent.

The Berlin decree, the continental blockade, the vision of a universal empire, and the final and fatal issue—the whole future of the man—are embodied in

this document, which Lanfrey calls "the dream of a lunatic" and Ranke "the expression of a great idea," and which had the singular fate of being put into shape by the coolest head in Napoleon's counsels and a firm friend of England. If the dispatch had reached the English Government in its original form, the year 1802 would not have ended in peace. But, no doubt in concert with his chief, Otto toned it down before presenting it to Lord Hawkesbury, who in his reply stated that he would take his stand on the position of Europe at the time of the Peace of Amiens.

When the Peace of Amiens was signed, rejoined the First Consul, the Italian Republic, Piedmont, and Switzerland were already occupied by the French. England had not mentioned these countries in the treaty, and had therefore forfeited the right to demand guarantees in respect of a state of things which she had never recognised, while on her part she had contravened the text of the treaty by extending her rule in India. England was not wanting in counter-charges. Elba had been annexed to France at the same time as Piedmont, and French agents were busy both in England and Ireland. Instructions from Talleyrand, which were not prompted solely by a desire to renew the old commercial relations, were found on one of the latter, Fauvelet, and published by the English Government. In the East Sebastiani was engaged on a secret mission, which the First Consul referred to later in

a conversation with Lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, saying that the possession of Egypt by France might only be a question of time. The pen-and-ink war in the unofficial English Press was answered by Napoleon himself in the *Moniteur* with attacks on the English Cabinet, which was accused of being too weak or too hostile to protect him against conspiracy and assassination. Parliament had been sitting since the 16th of November, and listened with ill-concealed impatience to Fox's last arguments in exculpation of the policy of the French. The two ambassadors, Andreossy and Lord Whitworth, did not arrive in London and Paris till December. For some weeks discussion was avoided of questions which admitted of no agreement. England could afford to wait, for she was in possession of the hostage on which peace depended. She had not evacuated Malta, and, consequently, the most important provision of the treaty of Amiens had not been carried out. The English Cabinet gave the formal excuse that four of the Powers, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Spain, had declined to give the promised guarantee of the new order of things in the island, and that therefore the cession to the Order of St. John could not take place. Thiers makes Talleyrand responsible for this, charging him with having failed to support the action taken by English diplomatists at the various courts. It was only owing, says Thiers, to the energy of Champagny,

who acted without instructions, that Austria replied in the affirmative. But both the First Consul and Talleyrand applied to Prussia for the guarantee, and received an answer from Haugwitz that it would endanger the neutrality league of the German states, so earnestly desired by France, in case of a war with Austria; and the guarantee was not given. In the preceding spring Lord St. Helens, the English ambassador in St. Petersburg, reported that the Emperor Alexander was averse to it; when the French ambassador reverted to the subject in the autumn he met with a refusal, and Russia continued to occupy the Ionian Islands. The election of a Grand Master of the Maltese Order took place late in the day and after many difficulties, because both France and Russia tried to push their own candidates. When the Pope's nominee Tomasi demanded the surrender of the island from the English governor on the 2nd of March, 1803, his envoy was informed that his request could not be complied with because some of the Powers, who were to have guaranteed the independence of the Order, had not carried out this provision of the treaty.

Thiers' theory of negligence on the part of Talleyrand is quite untenable. Napoleon, who in the wide range of his powers knew the name of every obscure agent and every recalcitrant country *curé*, and prescribed with the same care the shape of his senators' swords, the

erection of windmills on the Dutch pattern, and the conduct of his Cabinet, dictated to his Minister down to the demeanour and the gestures which were to accompany his diplomatic action: "Je désire que la conférence ne se tourne pas en parlage," he wrote before one of the last interviews between Talleyrand and Lord Whitworth. "Montrez-vous-y froid, altier et même un peu fier. Si la note contient le mot ultimatum, faites-lui sentir que ce mot renferme celui de guerre, que cette manière de négocier est d'un supérieur à un inférieur; si la note ne contient pas ce mot, faites qu'il le mette, en lui observant qu'il faut enfin savoir à quoi nous en tenir, que nous sommes las de cet état d'anxiété, que jamais on n'obtiendra de nous ce que l'on a obtenu des dernières années des Bourbons; que nous ne sommes plus ce peuple qui recevait un commissaire à Dunkerque; que l'ultimatum remis, tout devra être rompu. Effrayez-le sur les suites de cette remise; s'il est inébranlable, accompagnez-le dans votre salon; au point de vous quitter, dites-lui: 'Mais le Cap et l'île de Gorée sont-ils évacués?' Radoucissez un peu la fin de la conférence, et invitez-le de revenir avant d'écrire à sa cour, afin que vous puissiez lui dire l'impression qu'elle a faite sur moi . . ."

The ruler who calculated the dramatic effect of every scene with the skill of a practised impresario, and the Minister who was minutely controlled and reprimanded for the slightest oversight, were not likely to have

neglected the most important point in the strategical position. If Talleyrand was lukewarm in defending it, the reason was that at the time, and not only afterwards when he wrote his Memoirs, he was of opinion that England had a right to Malta under the circumstances, and that if he pressed Russia he would alienate her and yet not secure peace with England.

All hope of this peace had vanished. On the 30th of January the *Moniteur* published a report of Sebastiani's mission to Egypt, discussing the prospects of a re-conquest of the country by France, with the deliberate intention of provoking a rupture with England. On the 18th of February the First Consul had the famous interview with Lord Whitworth at which he mooted the partition of the world between England, who was mistress of the seas, and France, who was master of the Continent. When the ambassador met the complaints of English intrigues by a reference to Piedmont and Switzerland, he received the answer: "Ce sont des bagatelles." For the bagatelle of an Austrian intervention in Switzerland England had offered a subsidy of one hundred million florins in Vienna, while Fox admitted in a private letter that what had taken place in Switzerland constituted a *casus belli*. Two days after this interview appeared the annual report to the Legislative Assembly, which referred to the struggle between the peace and

war parties in England, prophesied the triumph of the latter, and concluded by saying that in that case five hundred thousand men were ready to take the field, a force against which England in her isolation would be powerless. On the 8th of March George III. issued an appeal to the nation, in order to be prepared for any eventuality. A few days later the First Consul selected the reception in the Tuileries for an outburst against Lord Whitworth, as he had done a year previously with Consalvi. This was not the way to make the English more accommodating; but before the latter delivered their ultimatum, diplomatic notes were exchanged, the contents of which must have been particularly painful for Talleyrand. The adherent of free trade was obliged, in the interests of his master's policy, to represent the wish for a commercial treaty as an attack on the welfare and independence of France, and the lover of peace was forced to reject all compromise on the subject of Malta at Berlin and St. Petersburg as incompatible with French honour.

His real opinions, however, were known, and were not looked for in his official despatches. Luchesini wrote that Talleyrand never approved Sebastiani's mission to the Levant, still less the insulting and ill-timed reports of this young relation of Bonaparte; that he disapproved of the St. Cloud manifesto to the Swiss; had threatened resignation in case the plan of making the First Consul President of the Helvetian Republic

were not abandoned; and that he had endeavoured in vain to soften the tone of the Press with regard to England, and suppress the invectives in Lebrun's report to the *corps législatif*. Luchesini was well-informed. The first deep line of cleavage between the First Consul and his Minister for Foreign Affairs dates from the spring of this year. Napoleon mistrusted him so completely that he approached Lord Whitworth through Malouet, the old and tried adviser of Louis XVI. in the Constituent Assembly, and afterwards through his brother Joseph and Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely, Lord Whitworth preferring these channels of communication, because he considered Talleyrand and his surroundings as only approachable "cash in hand." This resort to underhand diplomacy did not promote the cause of peace. Miot de Melito, who was in the secret, found Joseph as ignorant and as full of prejudice with regard to England as the First Consul himself; the proposal for an indefinite occupation of Malta by Russia was declined by England, and an ultimatum despatched, demanding an indemnity for the King of Sardinia and the evacuation of Holland and Switzerland. When Talleyrand delivered the note the excitement in the Council of Ministers rose to a pitch, and the First Consul received him with the remark that respect for his person should have prevented him from presenting such a communication at all. The Minister, says Miot, bowed

in silence to the storm. On the following day Lord Whitworth left Paris.

Since the 12th of March Luchesini knew from intimations conveyed by Talleyrand that a rupture with England would lead to a French occupation of Hanover. A few days afterwards Duroc made his appearance in Berlin on a second secret mission, to acquaint the Prussian Government of the fact. He found no sympathy for England in the capital. The losses sustained by Prussian subjects, arising out of the violation of the neutral flag, were fresh in their minds. Eight hundred Prussian merchantmen had been captured by the English. In 1801 Count Haugwitz himself estimated the damage at twelve millions, and was in favour of repeating the experiment of that year, and proceeding eventually to an occupation of Hanover. England had not been averse to the first short occupation by the Prussians. Her statesmen had been accustomed for a century to distinguish between national and dynastic interests, and the entry of the Prussian troops had spared her the complications on the Continent which she so much dreaded. But Frederick William III. took a different view on this question to his Minister, who was now thoroughly uneasy. He had always considered the occupation of Hanover as unjustifiable, and the consciousness of this paralysed his resistance now that the First Consul insisted on an occupation by France. "Je n'ai pu

contester à la France le droit de chercher son ennemi partout où elle a pu l'atteindre," the King wrote to Luchesini; "je l'ai pu d'autant moins que moi-même, il y a deux ans, engagé avec les puissances maritimes dans cette rixe mémorable avec l'Angleterre, où moi seul je n'ai pas abandonné les principes, j'ai fait porter à l'électorat la peine des torts de son souverain." His sympathies now pointed the same way as his scruples of conscience. The Russian alliance was not only a tradition of the epoch of the Great Frederick for the Prussian state, but also a matter of personal inclination for the King of Prussia since he had met the young Tsar at Memel in the autumn of 1801, and contracted with him one of those rare friendships which influence the policy of sovereigns. In 1801 Russia was in favour of the Prussian occupation of Hanover, but now she was against it. The feeling towards France in St. Petersburg had turned to complete mistrust, all attempts to set bounds to her power having failed, and the *protégés* of the Russian Government not being secure against her encroachments. In June, after the final proposals of Russia and Prussia had been rejected in London, the convention of Suhlingen abandoned Hanover to the French, who advanced from Holland, and shortly afterwards they occupied Ritzebüttel, which belonged to Hamburg.

In his despatch of May 17th, Talleyrand endeavoured to give the Prussian Government tranquil-

lising assurances respecting this new departure, which destroyed the keystone of its policy, the protectorate over North Germany. At the same time he sketched a programme for the future by expressing a wish for a Franco-Prussian alliance. The decisive moment had come, he wrote; if Prussia proved refractory now, she would drive France into the arms of Austria, who would be only too glad to renew the alliance of 1756: "Nos désirs," concluded the despatch, "sont pour la Prusse; qu'elle ne nous force pas de rechercher l'Autriche . . . La Russie, cette montagne de neige, ne saurait vous intimider."

They were not prepared for a proposal of this kind in Berlin, but the warning which accompanied it could not have come at a more timely moment, for Russia was just then making Prussia overtures for an alliance, based on an engagement to protect North Germany from hostile invasion and guarantee the independence of the Hanse towns. The decision lay with the King. His affection for the Tsar existed side by side with a conviction that Prussia could not dispense with the friendship of France. He saw more clearly than Haugwitz that half measures and preparations such as the Minister proposed increased rather than diminished the danger. Only a direct attack on the part of the French, he wrote, would provoke him to reprisals. To the Tsar he expressed a wish for an understanding, while he despatched a confidential envoy in July to

the First Consul in the person of Lombard, the secretary of his cabinet. An issue might be found out of the dilemma in which the policy of neutrality was landed, if "the old attractive plan" of Haugwitz, the triple alliance, could be realised.

Lombard found the First Consul at Brussels, accompanied by Talleyrand and surrounded with princely state; he was on a tour through the newly acquired territories, which resembled a triumphal procession. But it was too late for the object of the mission, the relations between France and Russia having seriously changed for the worse. A proposal made in June by France that Russia should act as arbitrator in the dispute with England had been declined at St. Petersburg. The Tsar was neither duped nor conciliated by it: he was already thinking of an alliance with Austria, which was destined to overthrow the Napoleonic Empire ten years later, but came to nothing in 1803 owing to Austria's reluctance to draw the sword on behalf of North German interests. The Russian ambassador Markoff spoke openly in Paris of the First Consul as "the incarnation of Jacobinism," and had to be recalled. Lombard found Talleyrand excessively annoyed with Russia, but all the more ready to close with Prussia. The negotiations began in which Haugwitz for months and months endeavoured to turn the difficulties of his position by submitting a series of draft-treaties, which were rejected one after

another in Paris, and at last, in January 1804, dwindled into proposals for the withdrawal of some of the French troops from Hanover, for concessions as regards freedom of trade at the mouths of the Elbe and Weser, and for the evacuation of the towns of Cuxhaven and Ritzebüttel, which had been illegally occupied by the French. The First Consul wished to make the last concession only, and demanded in return that Prussia should guarantee the execution of the German territorial arrangements still unrecognised by Austria, and the *status quo* in Italy and Turkey. In Italy, however, the French had seized the harbours of Taranto, Brindisi, and Otranto in June, which offended Russia, who had been an ally of the kingdom of Naples since 1798, almost as much as the occupation of Hanover. The guarantee of the *status quo* in Turkey was also not a matter of indifference to her, as just at that moment Alexander was supposed to be inclined to revive the Oriental schemes of the Empress Catherine. Under these circumstances the French alliance was only possible for Prussia at the risk of a rupture with Russia, who refused point-blank to come to terms with France, and a probable war with Austria.

The risk was too great for Frederick William III., and he wrote to the Tsar saying that he still hoped only to require his advice, but that his apprehensions for his own country would not be set at rest until he knew that he could count on Russia's assistance in the

event of the First Consul being disappointed in his calculations and revenging himself on Prussia. The tone of Alexander's reply was reserved. Honour and the true interests of the Prussian State, he wrote, were incompatible with the universal supremacy of a man who had proved so little worthy of it. If the King made a stand in defence of the independence of Europe, Russia would not leave him to carry on this great struggle alone. On the 3rd of April Luchesini was instructed to break off negotiations for an alliance, which was to be replaced by a benevolent neutrality, the King engaging not to join in any scheme hostile to France, provided that the First Consul on his part confined himself to the occupation of Hanover, and refrained from all further encroachment on German territory. The defensive alliance with Russia, which was concluded on the 24th of May, was designed only to meet the case of a French attack of this kind. It was at this point that Count Haugwitz, the Prussian Foreign Minister, retired from office, broken in health, a prey to disappointment, and filled with dismal forebodings for the future. He was succeeded by von Hardenberg, of whom Talleyrand reported privately to Napoleon that he had neither the ability, nor the knowledge of affairs, nor the authority of his predecessor. This was Talleyrand's second attempt at forming an alliance with Prussia, and in 1804 he had to register a defeat as well as in 1792. The unexpectedness of the

blow made him feel it all the more: "Le moment de l'alliance est arrivé," he wrote in a confidential letter to the First Consul on the 15th of November, referring to the Emperor Alexander as "un homme froid et de petit esprit," in the same correspondence. The failure of his plans and the victory of Russian over French influence at Berlin jeopardised his policy of a triple division of Germany. Prudence, however, forbade any display of resentment for the moment, and made him emphasise the transitory character of France's recent aggressions and his own desire for a peaceful solution.

While Talleyrand's diplomacy was meeting with unlooked-for difficulties in Berlin, he had to make Spain, the servile ally of France, put up with an infraction of a treaty. In order to have a free hand against England, the First Consul had sold Louisiana for eighty millions to the United States, in spite of his engagement in 1801 to give Spain the right of pre-emption. The attitude of Godoy, who was suspected of having a secret understanding with England, led to the formation of a camp at Bayonne, and Talleyrand had to compose despatches which branded the *Prince de la Paix* as a traitor to his country, and to present an ultimatum insisting on Spain's compliance with all the demands of France, in default of which eighty thousand French troops would cross the frontier. The wretched ruined country had no alternative but to submit. On the 9th of October, 1803, a treaty was

signed at Madrid, raising the amount of Spain's subsidy to the enormous sum of six million francs a month, and binding her to use her influence to make Portugal pay for her pseudo-neutrality by a yearly contribution of sixteen millions.

The array of forces marshalled against England would have been incomplete without some conspirators from Ireland. This time their headquarters was in Paris, and Talleyrand was instructed to assure the ringleaders on behalf of the Government that peace would not be concluded with England until Ireland's independence was secured, provided that twenty thousand Irishmen were ready to help the landing of the French.

As for the tributary states, the sacrifices in men and money which they were expected to make were dictated to them. What compulsion did in their case was effected by spontaneous impulse in France. For a moment it seemed as if public opinion hesitated to follow the dictator in the path which was bound to lead to universal war. Then all the sympathies of the subdued nation went out to meet him. They accepted the draconic measure making all British subjects found on French soil prisoners of war; they outdid one another in voluntary contributions to the army and the fleet. The preparations for the invasion of England took hold of men's imaginations, and drew from them expressions of devotion which borrowed their rhetoric

from 1789 and their submissiveness from the traditions of the *ancien régime*. A more searching glance, however, into the chaos of passion and intrigue reveals another picture. The declaration of war against England had given fresh life to the hopes of the intransigent Royalists. From every quarter of Europe emissaries reported the revival of Royalist plots. The ghost of the restoration of the monarchy, which had never been quite laid, flitted before the eyes of Napoleon at the moment when his own family was torn by hatred and discord, and the house of Bonaparte had only one heir, the son of Louis. "Are we blind," cried Joseph, when he heard of Lucien's second marriage, "and is France to be restored to its old rulers through our own fault?" In 1801 Lucien had recommended a marriage with a Spanish Infanta, and now Joseph was in favour of a German Princess or a Russian Grand Duchess, treating a divorce from Joséphine merely as a question of time. But they went too far, and created a reaction in her favour. Talleyrand took a more correct view of the situation a few months later, when he advised that the crown should be placed on the head of the woman whom Napoleon still loved.

In the meanwhile the irritability of the First Consul developed into paroxysms of rage on receipt of reports from a secret police composed of informers, which proved that the headquarters of the plot was in

London, where funds were provided, and that the co-operation of *émigrés* with French republicans formed part of the scheme. "I was a witness of agitation, of apprehensions, and of harrowing nights, of which it is difficult to convey an idea," reports the faithful Meneval. D'Antraigues, the Royalist agent and intriguer, who had quarrelled with Louis XVIII. and was now in the pay of Russia, and was intercepting couriers and ransacking portfolios in Dresden, had correspondents in Paris who were connected with Talleyrand's surroundings. They reported that the First Consul could not sleep, and that the watchword in the Tuileries was changed every two hours. It was no secret that his relations with the discontented, isolated Moreau had been strained since 1801. From that time the idea of enlisting the latter in the plot against the First Consul was present to the minds of the conspirators. Since Fructidor 1797, when Pichegru had been persuaded by the Royalist agent Fauche-Borel to espouse the cause of the Duke of Condé, all relations between him and Moreau, who preserved his republican sentiments, had been broken off. Fauche now undertook to reconcile the two old comrades in arms. The conspirators in London had no idea that the First Consul's spies kept him informed of every detail of these proceedings, and that Fouché especially, who had ceased to be Police Minister in 1802, wished to show that he was indispensable by obtaining proofs

against Moreau. Fauche was arrested first, and then another agent named David, while the London conspirators were egged on from Paris; for proofs were still wanting, and the accomplices, whose arrest was all-important, still at liberty. The execution of the plot was entrusted to Georges, who had been in hiding in Paris since August. He soon arrived at the conclusion that the original plan of a rising had no chance of success, and for it was substituted the adventurous scheme of attacking the First Consul and his escort with an equal number of men, and killing him in single combat. While Georges was picking his men for this *coup de main*, Pichegru came to Paris, whither the Comte d'Artois and his son the Duc de Berry were to follow him at the last moment. Savary waited twenty-eight days for them on the coast of Brittany; but they never appeared, having received timely warning of the arrest of Moreau, Georges, and Pichegru, which had taken place in Paris in the meanwhile. The treachery of some Chouans and the confession of Bouvet de Lozier, a lieutenant of Georges, had put the Government on their track. A senatus-consultum empowered it to bring all attempts on the life of the chief of the state before the tribunal of the Seine and try them without a jury. Before the case came on for hearing Pichegru was found strangled in prison.

The Government's anticipation that it would convict the English representatives at the courts of Hesse,

Wurtemberg, and Bavaria of complicity in the conspiracy was disappointed, although Drake, the *charge d'affaires* at Munich, fell into a trap set by Napoleon's agents in accordance with his own instructions. But another incident was attended with a disastrous result. A report spread that a prince of the house of Bourbon was one of the conspirators collected by Georges in Paris, and, as the residence of the other members of the family was known, suspicion could only attach to one of them. This was the Duke of Enghien, who, since the disbanding of the Duke of Condé's corps, had been living on an English pension in Baden, in the little town of Ettenheim near the French frontier, and made no secret of his intention to maintain the rights of his family with the sword. The report concerning him was untrue, but it reminded Napoleon once more of a prince whose name he had seen affixed to the protest of Louis XVIII. in 1803. Almost simultaneously, on the 25th of January, 1804, Champagny reported from Vienna that the English secretary of embassy, Stuart, had referred to a note from the Duke applying for employment in the English service "against his bitterest enemies." Champagny added the apparently incredible statement that Stuart had asked for a safe-conduct for the prince through France. The note was found by the First Consul among the Duke's papers on the 17th of March.

The law of the Convention, imposing the penalty

of death on all persons guilty of armed resistance to the Government, was still in force, and a new law directed against persons sheltering political conspirators had just been enacted. On the 28th of February the secret agent Mehée informed the Councillor of State Réal of meetings between Royalist officers and the Duke of Enghien at Offenburg, with the object of invading Alsace in case the conspiracy was successful. On the morning of March 10th Talleyrand was ordered to demand the extradition of these officers from the Elector of Baden through the Minister, Baron Edelsheim, and to request explanations from Massias, the French *chargé d'affaires* in Carlsruhe. The latter, who was an old officer and *protégé* of the First Consul, was able to give satisfactory explanations. He had reported the presence of the Duke in Ettenheim, but had heard nothing suspicious about his proceedings. In his justification ("Memoirs," iii., 307, 310) Talleyrand states twice in the most positive manner that he was himself instructed by the First Consul to inform the Elector of Baden that he had no objection to the Duke living in Ettenheim. In the meanwhile Napoleon's confidant Réal applied for direct information to the prefect of Strasburg, who, misled by a confusion of the names Thumery and Dumouriez, reported that the latter was in Ettenheim.

The First Consul had sworn to shoot the first Bourbon who fell into his hands. Talleyrand, and

still more Fouché, knew what he was capable of, and they themselves had, after the attempt with the infernal machine, put in his hands the weapon of legal despotism which could be used against the innocent. On the evening of March 10th Bonaparte summoned the two Consuls, the Ministers, and Fouché, to a special conference on the arrest, and, if Thiers' information is correct, the execution, of the Duke of Enghien. On the authority of the (still unpublished) memoirs of the Consul Cambacérès, who was present, Thiers assigns the parts of the different actors on this decisive occasion. According to this version, Lebrun made no secret of his horror of what was coming, while Cambacérès protested against a violation of international law, and implored the First Consul to have some concern for his reputation. The Minister of the Interior, Chaptal, only refers to the proceedings in the following enigmatic language: "The First Consul was not easily swayed by outside influence, and those who have been accused of participation in the crime acted on compulsion; the real culprits escaped." "J'ai tout vu," he adds; but does not say what he did see. Regnier, the Minister of Justice and Chief of the Police, was under the influence of Fouché, who strongly advocated open war against the Royalists.

And Talleyrand? Savary, Napoleon's "gensd'arme à tout faire," quotes Cambacérès in his own defence, and also the contents of a report, read by Talleyrand

at the meeting of March 10th, which dealt with the conspiracies abroad and the necessity of giving some pledge to the Revolution, and is said to have ended with the proposal "to arrest the Duke of Enghien et d'en finir." Michaud, Chateaubriand, Sainte-Beuve, d'Haussonville, and Pasquier have all, with unimportant variations, rested their case against Talleyrand on this document, although Napoleon's trustworthy secretary, Meneval, expressly stated that it never existed or had been destroyed by Talleyrand in 1814. Meneval proved right in the end. Talleyrand's alleged report is a forgery which his secretary Perrey committed and confessed to on his death-bed. We have only one authentic record concerning his attitude on the 10th of March, and that is his own statement, which convicts him. "He told me several times," writes Madame de Rémusat, "that Napoleon informed him and the two Consuls of his irrevocable determination with regard to the Duke of Enghien, that all three knew that remonstrance would be useless, and so said nothing."

On that very evening of March 10th Generals Ordener and Caulaincourt received direct orders from the First Consul to arrest the Duke of Enghien and his accomplices. A second letter of Talleyrand's to Baron Edelsheim, dated the 11th of March, 3 a.m., acquaints him with the decision of the First Consul, rendered necessary by the exceptional peril of the situation,

and requests him "to send two small detachments to Offenburg and Ettenheim to seize the authors of a crime which, if proved, would place them beyond the pale of the law." A third letter of Talleyrand's, addressed to Caulaincourt, contained instructions only to deliver the letter to Edelsheim in case of a violation of territory. In his justification of 1824, which the charge in Savary's memoirs extorted from him, Talleyrand says that these three letters constitute his sole share in the deed, which he admits was a breach of international law, and "une malheureuse nécessité."

He passes over the conference of March 10th in silence, but this is the very thing which fixes the extent of his responsibility, for after it had taken place there could hardly have been a shadow of a doubt that the Duke of Enghien was to be murdered to please the First Consul. Pasquier says that a lady, whose name he does not mention, heard Talleyrand reply "On le fusillera," to the whispered question as to what was to be done with the Duke. This was at a ball in the Hotel de Luynes, before the Duke arrived in Paris. After this Talleyrand's name appears only once more in connection with the event. Owing to a misunderstanding, the carriage, which brought the prisoner direct from Strasburg and arrived in Paris at three o'clock in the afternoon of March 20th, drove into the court of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, instead of proceeding direct to Vincennes in accordance

with the instructions given. This unpleasant incident was the cause of Talleyrand's much discussed visit to Murat, the Governor of Paris, whose orders were necessary for the further transport of the prisoner. The responsibility for what took place at Vincennes eleven hours afterwards is shared by Savary and Réal.

When the news of the execution became known in Paris on the morning of March 21st, d'Hauterive, pale with terror, hurried to Talleyrand: "Eh bien, quoi, ce sont les affaires," is said to have been the latter's rejoinder. When other people asked him if he intended to resign, he replied, "Si, comme vous le dites, Bonaparte s'est rendu coupable d'un crime, ce n'est pas une raison pour que je me rende coupable d'une faute." Years afterwards, in a conversation with Lamartine, he expressed himself as follows: "Did you ever know crime of use to a sensible man? It is the resource of political fools, and is like the breaker which returns and overwhelms you. I had my failings, some say even vices,—mais des crimes, fi donc!"

The impression of horror which the murder at first produced in Paris proved transitory. Perhaps, wrote Luchesini, the First Consul was a better judge of Frenchmen than they were themselves, if, like Richelieu, he thought that the most reprehensible acts of violence strengthened rather than impaired authority in their eyes. Before it was known what Europe would say, Talleyrand was ready with an

answer. To Champagny he wrote briefly, as early as the 19th of March, that if protests were raised, and appeals made to international law, he was to put them off abruptly, "même avec moquerie," adding, that when the welfare of a great country was at stake its defensive measures could not be weighed nicely in the scale. Only a rough draft exists of the most compromising despatch, that to Vienna, in which Talleyrand tells the deliberate lie that "the Duke was arrested with arms in his hand," and there is no proof that it was ever really sent. At all events, Austria was persuaded into an unworthy abstention from all open censure. The Vienna Government was all the more anxious not to break with France for the present because, since the commencement of the year, it had been negotiating for a new treaty with Russia. Otto, the French envoy in Munich, was told that France had rendered the Elector of Baden a service by relieving him of the necessity of surrendering the conspirators. Laforest, the ambassador at Berlin, who had referred to the excitement which the news of the crime had created there, was reprimanded by the Minister for his want of dignity and self-control: "Vous n'avez pas senti combien de la part du ministre de France le moindre embarras, la moindre hésitation sur les actes quelconques de son gouvernement devait être d'un mauvais effet." In a letter to Hardenberg, who concurred with him, Lombard came to the conclusion that the

best course was to take no notice of what had happened, although the Queen wished to go into mourning. The Bourbon courts behaved worst. The court of Naples announced that it would not go into mourning, and its ambassador Gallo was present at the ball which Talleyrand had the hardihood to give on the 24th of March. The King of Spain regretted that the Duke of Enghien had compromised himself, and Godoy told Beurnonville that wherever bad blood showed itself it must be let off. The King of Sweden, who was in Carlsruhe, took a different view. He intervened in favour of the Duke on the 20th of March, and afterwards asked for his will. "Reply," wrote Talleyrand in his despatch to Massias, "that we do not meddle with Swedish affairs, and expect Sweden to do the same as regards France." Russia proved troublesome, and protested in Regensburg as guarantor of the constitution of the German Empire, and the court went into mourning. General Hédouville, who represented France at St. Petersburg, received a note in which Talleyrand asked whether Alexander would have any scruples about arresting his father's murderers, if they were within easy reach of the frontier? They were sitting at the same table with him! Talleyrand broke the force of the Russian intervention by means of Dalberg. At Regensburg, Baden declared herself satisfied with the French explanations, and expressed a hope that matters would stop there.

Napoleon wrote on the margin of a copy of Fleury de Chabulon's history of his reign: "Prince Talleyrand behaved as a loyal Minister in the affair of the Duke of Enghien, and the Emperor never had any fault to find with him on this head." The man who bestowed this dubious commendation based his own justification on the *raison d'état* of the Borgias and Macchiavelli, the right of the usurper as against the legitimate monarch. When Brulard, the newly-appointed Governor of Corsica, had his farewell audience of the Duc de Berry in 1814, it was half in jest and half in earnest that the Duke said to the old *chouan* about Napoleon: "Ne trouverez-vous pas moyen de lui faire donner le coup de pouce?" But Napoleon was not joking when he said to Madame de Rémusat: "Le meilleur conseil qu'il y aurait eu à donner aux Bourbons eut été de se défaire de moi." A reaction came later with the conviction that the crime formed a gulf between himself and the civilised world; and this led to the accusations against Talleyrand, the statements made to Las Cases and O'Meara in St. Helena, that it was he who first drew attention to the Duke, that he had intercepted letters and documents, and that the catastrophe was owing to his advice. It is now proved that the name of the Duke of Enghien was known to the First Consul long before 1804, and that all his papers found at Ettenheim on the 17th and 19th of March came into the latter's hands. It was not Talleyrand,

who has enough to answer for without this, but Savary, "cet honnête garçon," as the First Consul called him to Roederer, and Réal, who did not arrive at Vincennes till the victim had breathed his last, who are responsible for the fact that the Duke's urgent written request for an interview with the First Consul was delivered too late. The view that Napoleon ever felt remorse for his act is not supported by any proof. He defends it in his will. In 1804 it was anything but a useless crime. The Empire was born of the conflict between Jacobin and Royalist hate, and of the prevailing conviction that the consolidation of Bonaparte's rule could alone preserve the nation from the horrors of reaction on the one hand and complete anarchy on the other. The last words of Georges on the scaffold, that he and his accomplices had achieved more than they intended, and had given France an Emperor instead of a King, were justified by the event.

Since the year 1800 Talleyrand had advocated the change to a hereditary form of government, in opposition to Fouché, but he preferred the adoption of the title of king. This was Talleyrand's cue, Napoleon remarked to Madame de Rémusat, to make a kind of heir to the throne of him. At any rate, Talleyrand succeeded in getting the offensive title of Emperor of Gallia dropped. Both Austria and Prussia were bound by earlier declarations with regard to the First Consul's entry into the ranks of European sovereigns. Cobenzl

now made his consent conditional on the Imperial title being assured to the Hapsburgers as rulers of the hereditary dominions of Austria. The idea of a Prussian Empire was started in Paris, and found great favour with Hardenberg, while the title of Emperor of Spain and Mexico was discussed in Madrid. The empires on the Spree and Manzanares were castles in the air—that of Napoleon was a reality. Talleyrand joined the Consuls and Fouché, now re-appointed Police Minister, in drafting the new constitution, which was proclaimed as a fundamental law of the state on the 18th of May, 1804. He left his colleagues to adapt this final transformation of Sieyès' constitutional combinations to the requirements of imperial despotism, and contented himself with shaping its external form, and supplying the splendour and etiquette of a court. The Emperor did not think fit to bestow one of the six newly-created high offices on a Minister, and it was not till he left the Ministry in 1807 that he was appointed *Vice-grand électeur*, with a salary which amounted, all in all, to nearly five hundred thousand francs. According to the well-informed Ségur his consent to act as Grand Chamberlain in 1804 was given with reluctance, and his dissatisfaction is intelligible when we bear in mind the tone in which the Emperor addressed the persons about his court: "Monsieur Talleyrand, mon grand chambellan," he wrote in December 1804, "je vous fais cette lettre pour

vous témoigner mon mécontentement de ce que vous avez permis que les invitations de mercredi portassent le mot de souper, puisque l'heure pour laquelle elles étaient est celle de mon dîner. Mon intention est que dans mon palais, comme ailleurs, on obéisse aux lois. Napoléon." We can understand also that it was on an occasion of this kind that Talleyrand replied: "Le bon goût est votre ennemi personnel. Si vous pouviez vous en défaire à coups de canon, il y a longtemps qu'il n'existerait plus."

The first official step which the new Emperor ordered his Minister to take was to write to Cardinal Fesch, the ambassador in Rome, to support the application for a coronation by the Pope. Six months later this result too was achieved. On the 28th of November Talleyrand received Pius VII. in the Tuileries. In the night of November 1st—2nd Napoleon's religious marriage with Joséphine took place. Talleyrand stated subsequently, agreeing with Berthier and Duroc, the latter of whom officiated as a witness of it, that the Emperor took the step against his will and out of consideration for the Pope and his wife, merely with the idea of going through a simple ceremony, which, in the absence of the necessary formalities prescribed by the Church, would not preclude a divorce afterwards.

Talleyrand now had to write a series of notes to tranquillise the Pope's conscience with reference to the passage in the Imperial oath, in which "respect

for the provisions of the Concordat and complete freedom of worship" were promised. One of the counter-stipulations of the Pope was to be excused from receiving Princess Talleyrand. The other concessions which he obtained were insignificant. Long before he returned to Rome the scheme for founding an Italian hereditary monarchy, which had been revealed in May 1804, was an accomplished fact. The report which conceded the Emperor a right derived from conquest of giving the heterogeneous group of Italian provinces such form of government as seemed best to his sovereign will and pleasure, was composed by Talleyrand. He was present when Napoleon put the Iron Crown on his head at Milan on the 26th of May, 1805. A kingdom of Lombardy, he says in his Memoirs, would have been compatible with the peace of Europe, but the kingdom of Italy, augmented in June by the incorporation of Genoa and the bestowal of Lucca on a Bonaparte, was not so. In spite of all his fruitless protests, he still remained an unwilling instrument of the policy to which he was now bound by complicity in crime.

CHAPTER XV.

TALLEYRAND MINISTER OF THE EMPIRE.

1804—1807.

UP to the establishment of the Empire Talleyrand had, in his diplomatic intercourse with the Cabinets of Europe, sought to maintain the fiction that the claims under discussion were those of states equal by virtue of the law of nations. But from this point his moderating influence falls more and more into the background, and no attempt is made to clothe the high-handed aggressiveness of Napoleon's policy in becoming form. No country was spared, and no treaty respected. The open aversion of a large party in Holland to France was sufficient to produce a note from the Emperor to the Minister, acquainting him with his intention to interfere in the affairs of the Republic. If no settlement could be made with the existing constitution, then a new one must be created. It was enough, he wrote on another occasion, to have to put up with England's insults on the high seas without being obliged to tolerate Russia's impertinences. Austria's intention of raising "the standard of rebellion" alone or in concert with Russia he de-

nounced as mad and impossible. If Talleyrand refused to repeat this language, Napoleon intervened himself, and sent threatening letters to Madrid and Naples, to Constantinople, and even to Persia, which no conciliatory explanations of his Minister could extenuate. The latter was obliged to make the small German courts expel the English envoys, and force Rome to surrender the Royalist agent Vernègues, in spite of his being a Russian subject. His success in persuading Napoleon to liberate Rumbold, England's representative with the Hanse towns and Lower Saxony, who had already been put in prison, delayed the impending rupture with Prussia. All relations with Russia had been broken off since 1804. Markoff's successor, Oubril, delivered an ultimatum demanding the neutrality of Naples, the withdrawal of French troops from there and from Hanover, and an indemnity for Sardinia. On its rejection Oubril left Paris, and Alexander sent his friend Novossiltzoff to England.

Pitt had become Prime Minister again since the 15th of May. He had not been able to persuade the King to include Fox, with whom he was now reconciled, in the Cabinet. Hardenberg's optimism led him to the conclusion that Pitt's second Ministry would be inclined towards peace. The Emperor Alexander thought otherwise, and offered England an alliance against Napoleon on the future basis of 1814; a war, not against France, who was to be free to choose her

own form of government, but against the usurper, and with the aim of re-instating Sardinia in her old position as a constitutional kingdom, of securing the independence of Holland and Switzerland, and establishing the system of natural frontiers. This was the policy of Czartorysky, Alexander's early friend and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the signal for a revival of Poland in the interests of Russia. Pitt did not accept the Russian programme, and once more intimated that the return of the Bourbons would be the best guarantee for the peace of Europe. An alliance was not concluded till the 11th of April in the following year. It was based on the solid foundation of English subsidies for every one hundred thousand men put in the field by Russia, and its objects were the expulsion of the French from North Germany, and the independence of Holland and Switzerland. Sweden was already bound by treaty. Austria hesitated and vacillated, and left her best diplomatist, Count Stadion, in a painful state of uncertainty at St. Petersburg. At last, on the 4th of November, she decided to sign a treaty for a defensive alliance, similar to that which Prussia had entered into with Russia in the preceding May. At the same time Count Cobenzl gave assurances in Paris that there was no intention of resorting to war. Talleyrand lent such a ready ear to them that Napoleon afterwards accused him of over-credulousness. The truth was that Talleyrand's policy went much

deeper, and that he was meditating a transition from a Prussian to an Austrian alliance. However, ample warning had been received in Paris that the union of the French with the Italian Crown would certainly be followed by war. July came before Austria abandoned the hope, if not of avoiding, at all events of retarding, this war, and before the Emperor Francis, in response to the pressing entreaties of Russia, joined the third Coalition.

The decisive step was kept a secret in Berlin, although the Imperial ambassador, Count Metternich, and an envoy of Alexander's, Wintzingerode, used all their powers of persuasion to win over Prussia. Talleyrand even did not know on the 2nd of August that the die was cast, and wrote to the Emperor: "S'il n'y a point de décision hostile de la part de la cour de Vienne, tout sujet sérieux de querelle entre la France et la Russie est renvoyé au temps où l'empire ottoman sera détruit." Luchesini was more clear-sighted, and in his despatches to Hardenberg explained the reasons why this continental war, which confronted Napoleon with six hundred thousand men, was not unwelcome to him, and had even become a necessity, like the campaign of 1800. At that time he was driven into war by the state of the finances and the need for undisputed military renown. Now his honour was compromised by the solemn proclamation of his intention to invade England, and the daily increasing

obstacles in the way of carrying out the hazardous undertaking, the preparations for which, as regards men, money, and materials, had been made on such a vast scale. Things had come to such a pass that Napoleon himself admitted to the Prussian ambassador in October 1804 that the difficulties were, if not insurmountable, at all events of a most formidable description. A year afterwards there were many who expressed doubts, which were, however, quite unfounded, as to whether he had ever seriously intended to invade England. He himself told Metternich in 1800 that the camp at Boulogne was from the beginning formed against Austria. Pitt's declaration of war against Spain in March 1805, and still more, Villeneuve's unsuccessful expedition from Toulon, dispelled the last doubts as to the possibility of effecting a landing on the British coast within a definite period.

It seemed as if Prussia would be the first to reap advantage from this. During the negotiations with Novossiltzoff, the English Cabinet had emphasised the intention of leaving her the Rhine provinces, and so erecting a barrier against French encroachment. Pitt was drawing a bill payable at a future date, but Napoleon held in his hands the hostage which placed Prussia at his disposal. "Take care," wrote Hardenberg to Luchesini in November 1804, "that Hanover, if it does change masters, falls to no one but Prussia." On the 29th

of July, 1805, Luchesini reported a friendly interview with Talleyrand, who offered Hanover to Prussia, now surrounded by four antagonists, but demanded in return a recognition of the new state of things in Italy. Negotiations followed between Luchesini, Talleyrand, and Laforest, respecting the independence of Holland and Switzerland, the integrity of the Empire and of the Italian states that were still independent, which promised to end in a peaceful settlement. On the 13th of August Napoleon informed Talleyrand of his resolve to attack Austria with two hundred thousand men, if she failed to disarm within a fortnight, and to be in Vienna by November. On the 22nd of August came the admission: "Une fois que j'aurai levé mon camp de l'Océan, je ne puis plus m'arrêter; mon projet de guerre maritime est tout-à-fait manqué." His decision to march against Austria was taken before Villeneuve's retreat to Cadiz had made the invasion of England an impossibility.

Talleyrand, who was summoned to Boulogne, predicted to Napoleon that the end of the war would find him Austria's ally. In the meanwhile, the Emperor spoilt his Minister's game in Berlin by arbitrary interference. Duroc was sent there once more on a secret mission. He arrived on the 1st of September, and announced Napoleon's intention of anticipating Austria's threatened attack and marching with his whole army to protect Bavaria. From Prussia he

demanded an alliance and the despatch of troops to Bohemia. Frederick William III. had been willing to draw nearer to France for the sake of peace, but now that she tried to drag him into war he resorted to his plan of an armed neutrality, put two hundred thousand men on a war footing, and, while war was raging round his frontiers and hostile Powers were courting his alliance, demanded the unconditional evacuation of Hanover.

In the meanwhile, hostilities were opened by the march of the Austrian troops into Bavaria, and Talleyrand followed the Emperor to his headquarters at Strasburg. Luchesini reported to Berlin that the Minister was "in despair" at the outbreak of war. Talleyrand had made him a communication on the 12th of August, which threw more light on his real thoughts. I am engaged, he said to Luchesini, on a political romance, with the object of preserving the peace of Europe. Next to quiet in Germany nothing is so important as the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, which, threatened by Russia, looks to Austria as its natural protector. The latter must give up Venice and its Swabian possessions, and be compensated by territory on the Danube. This would remove all ground of dispute with France, and put an end to the intrigues of Russia. Luchesini interpreted the communication as indicating a desire on the part of Napoleon to estrange the two German Powers from

Russia, and be free himself to choose an alliance with either of them.

From Strasburg Talleyrand wrote to d'Hauterive that he was indulging in a dream of the future. Napoleon was to give up the Italian crown, "as he had promised to do," demand the independence of Venice from Austria, help Austria to obtain Moldavia and Wallachia by way of compensation, conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with her, and send the Prussian alliance to the devil. This might be settled in four-and-twenty hours at Vienna. Meanwhile, Napoleon on his way to Ulm sent his Minister the laconic note: "J'ai des nouvelles de ce que fait Mack; il marche comme si je le conduisais moi-même. Il sera pris dans Ulm comme un vilain." Napoleon and Talleyrand met at Munich, after the capitulation; the Minister's "political romance" had ripened into a memorandum, the point of which was levelled at Prussia, "a second-rate Power in Europe, the ephemeral creation of Frederick the Great, which by its temporising irresolution has missed its opportunity of attaining greatness." The proposed surrender of the Italian throne was maintained. Tyrol was demanded of Austria, which was to be indemnified by Bessarabia and northern Bulgaria. Annexed to the memorandum was a regular draft of a treaty, guaranteeing the neutrality of Switzerland, and dividing the German territory to be ceded by Austria among the five South

German states of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Hesse, and Nassau, which had in the meanwhile joined France and sent contingents to her army. Baden was looked on as safe. In Munich Talleyrand found the Elector the same as he had known him formerly in Strasburg: —". . . . des manières et des goûts tout-à-fait français." His Minister Montgelas was well disposed towards France; "Madame de Montgelas encore mieux." On the 12th of November the bright prospect was clouded, for Talleyrand had to break the news of Trafalgar. Napoleon received it at St. Pölten, the pill being gilded thus: "It is with the deepest regret that I have to announce to Your Majesty the bad news from Cadiz concerning the allied fleets. Genius and good fortune were both in Germany." The Emperor's answer to the disaster of October 21st was contained in the victorious bulletins of the grand army. Its unparalleled success was accompanied by overtures for peace, which were made at Ulm and continued all through November without result, Austria rejecting them as inacceptable, although her chances of getting better terms dwindled daily. Vienna had been in the hands of the French since the 13th of November, but the Austrians still hoped to turn the fortune of war with the aid of the Russians, who had escaped Napoleon a first time by Koutousoff's stratagem. The Emperor Alexander delivered them into his hands. "He was dull at Olmütz," writes Talleyrand, "had

never been present at a battle, and wished to see what it was like." And so he witnessed Austerlitz.

On the following morning Talleyrand, accompanied by Lannes, visited the field of battle, which was strewn with fifteen thousand corpses. The Marshal was overcome with pity, but Talleyrand remained to all appearances unmoved. "You did not need such a spectacle: you have a kind heart," d'Hauterive wrote to him. There is no doubt that the Minister exerted all his influence to make Napoleon conclude peace, the terms of which he had been discussing since the 20th of November with Stadion and Giulay. Even now, after Austerlitz, he reverted to the Strasburg memorandum, and pleaded for "a bulwark against the barbarians," for the maintenance of the weakened but indispensable Empire, which deserved a magnanimous conqueror. If he could only have his way, he said, peace would be assured for a century. After the capitulation of Ulm the Emperor vacillated between a policy of moderation, which was taken from Talleyrand's programme, and his own projects, which soared into the infinite. At Brünn the Minister, who knew perfectly well what the Austrian negotiators risked by delay, advised them to come to terms as quickly as possible. He was thinking of Tyrol, which Napoleon had promised to spare in his interview with the Emperor Francis of December 4th; of Naples, whose doom was sealed since the Queen, in contravention

of her promised neutrality, had opened the port of the capital to the English and Russians in the middle of the war. But Lichtenstein and Giulay would not be convinced, and at Pressburg, whither the negotiations were transferred on the 21st of December, they were able to see how every day and every hour made their position worse. From Talleyrand's programme the Emperor borrowed only the cessions of territory which it imposed. By stripping Austria of Venice and Tyrol, of Friuli, Istria, and Dalmatia, and forcing her to recognise the kingdom of Italy, he deprived the treaty of all chance of durability, and paved the way for Stadion's policy and the rising of 1809. When Talleyrand referred to compensation on the Danube, Giulay declined, saying that the result would be a rupture with Russia. The possibility of another appeal to arms was discussed once more in Vienna as a means of escaping the hard terms of the conqueror, but it was frustrated by the speedy retreat of the Russian army. Alexander and Czartorysky counted the loss of "the only opportunity" of restoring the kingdom of Poland as one of the failures of the coalition. This was the point at which the "guerre de fantaisie," as Talleyrand used to call this Russian campaign, came into contact with solid fact and secured the future. Czartorysky's plan was based on opposition to Prussia, but instead of this the outbreak of war brought Russia and Prussia once more into close alliance.

While the movements of the Russian and Swedish troops were being followed with the greatest anxiety in Berlin, and the Prussian army put on a war footing for the protection of the eastern frontier, news arrived, on the 6th of October, of the march of the French through Ansbach territory. The insulted and indignant monarch still kept to his armed neutrality, in accordance with Haugwitz's and Hardenberg's advice, but he directed it against France, and made up his mind to join the coalition in case Napoleon rejected his overtures for mediation, which agreed in the main with the demands of England and Russia. The Emperor Alexander now came to Berlin, and added the charm of his personal influence. The result was the treaty of November 3rd, which made the independence of Naples, Sardinia, Holland, Switzerland, and the German Empire, and the separation of the thrones of France and Italy, the basis of future peace, and bound the Emperor to obtain from England the cession of Hanover to Prussia in return for compensations in Germany. Things had got so far when the news of Austria's defeats came one after another, and also of her negotiations with Napoleon. Count Haugwitz, the bearer of the Prussian proposals, travelled slowly, so slowly that Talleyrand thought that delay was part of his mission. This suited the Emperor exactly, and he took care that Haugwitz did not have his preliminary audience with him till the

28th of November, and his first conference with Talleyrand not till the 1st of December. At this last interview the treaty of November 3rd was not mentioned, Haugwitz doing his best to put a peaceful construction on the events of the last few months. On the following morning rose the sun of Austerlitz: "J'ai vu à la contenance de M. de Haugwitz," wrote Talleyrand to Napoleon, "que le sentiment dominant de sa cour est la peur." Both he and d'Hauterive, who from that time despised Prussia as much as they had hitherto detested her, were of opinion that a military demonstration on the part of Prussia in November would have placed Napoleon in great jeopardy, and made peace a necessity.

This, however, was not to be. On the 13th of December Napoleon received Count Haugwitz in Vienna, when he demanded a guarantee of the *status quo* on both sides, the cession of Ansbach, of the fortress of Wesel, of Cleves and Neuenburg, the recognition of Bavaria, now aggrandised and promoted to the rank of a kingdom, and of the full sovereignty of Wurtemberg and Baden, in return for which Prussia was to receive Hanover. On the 15th of December Haugwitz signed the treaty at Schönbrunn, and on the same day Talleyrand received the letter from the Emperor referring to the perfidy of the Queen of Naples, and containing the words "Je veux enfin châtier cette coquine." On New Year's Day the Emperor Francis

affixed his signature to the humiliating Peace of Pressburg, which inflicted on him enormous losses and gave him scarcely any compensation.

Talleyrand found himself in this peculiar position with regard to Austria, that his programme resembled the rejected proposals of the Vienna statesmen far more than Napoleon's terms. In his Memoirs he states emphatically how strongly he disapproved of the treaty with Haugwitz, "who deserved to pay for his folly or guilt with his head." Haugwitz afterwards told Gentz that he begged the king to dismiss him rather than ratify it. At Pressburg Talleyrand succeeded in reducing the war indemnity by ten millions. He also gave oral permission for the despatch of Austrian troops to Wurzburg, which was made over to the Arch-Duke Ferdinand. The Emperor was especially annoyed with his Minister for removing all ambiguities from the text of the treaty, which he afterwards, according to a report of Metternich's, dated February 1809, styled "infâme et d'œuvre de corruption." On the other hand, Talleyrand entirely approved of the changes in South Germany, which paved the way for the Confederation of the Rhine. In October 1805 Napoleon spoke to him of his "confédération germanique." On the 19th of July 1806, it was an acccomplished fact. Talleyrand had never quite discarded Choiseul's policy and the idea of a South German confederation, the origin of which

dated back to Richelieu's alliance of the Rhine in 1658. He attached special importance to being present at the marriage of the King's daughter with Eugène Beauharnais, whom his brother Archambault de Talleyrand had refused to accept as a son-in-law in 1803. He continued the negotiations with the fifteen German sovereigns in Paris, and elaborated the constitution of the Confederation of the Rhine with the aid of a new colleague, the able and earnest La Besnardière, an old Oratorian. The mediatisations became now as profitable to him as the secularisations had been three years before. Counts Senfft and Bose, the Minister Montgelas, Stapfer, and others tell the tale of what Saxony, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and afterwards Hamburg, paid Talleyrand. The bribes given by the smaller states made less stir. Dalberg was the confidant and the unctuous impresario of the Minister in these negotiations, the inventor of the name for Napoleon's protectorate of the Confederation of the Rhine, the bishop who destined Fesch for the primacy of the German Church, "the corsair," as Talleyrand used to call him, alluding to his former occupation. The thorn in the German flesh was the Grand-Duchy of Cleves and Berg, which was bestowed on Murat as a reward for his exploits, and which he ruled like a stage-king, his impetuosity threatening to produce hostile complications with Prussia as early as the spring of 1806.

Prussia, however, was once more the chief object

of Talleyrand's diplomacy. The treaty of December 15th was the cause of profound disquietude in Berlin. The government in consequence decided to ask Napoleon to postpone the cessions of territory provided for until peace was concluded with England, and Haugwitz arrived in Paris on the 2nd of February for that purpose. This was just the contrary of what Napoleon intended. Talleyrand, who had at first expressed himself so reassuringly to Laforest that a great portion of the Prussian army was placed on a peace footing, was now instructed to declare the treaty null and void, because the period fixed for its signature had expired. The new treaty made the Schönbrunn terms still worse by compelling Prussia to close her ports and so join in the war with England. At the same time she was asked to guarantee the integrity of Turkey, which endangered her relations with Russia. Luchesini obtained the ratification of this new treaty on the 25th of February, thus concluding the alliance which had been sought by France and avoided by Prussia for the space of ten years. The reward was Hanover, which belonged, not to the French, who disposed of it, but to the English, who wished to keep it, although Fox was now Prime Minister.

Trafalgar had cost the life of Nelson. Austerlitz killed Pitt, but did not shake his belief in the future. His last visitor was Wellesley, who had just returned from India; the dying man's prophecy was that only

a war of peoples could save Europe, and that this war would begin in Spain. He died on the 23rd of January. On the 4th of February Napoleon wrote to Talleyrand that now Fox was Premier the cession of Hanover to Prussia could only take place as part of a general peaceful settlement. Thiers thinks that peace with England would have been possible if Napoleon had carried out this idea and not renewed the treaty with Prussia. Even Lanfrey is inclined to take the same view. But it was out of the question that England should ratify the fresh aggressions of France at other points of the Continent, or that France should recede from the position which she had won. On the 14th of March Talleyrand received the following laconic communication: "Holland is without an executive. She requires one. I will give her Prince Louis." Joseph had already been raised to the rank of King of Naples. The relations with the Pope were so strained that Napoleon openly discussed the annexation of the States of the Church, and informed Pius VII. that he intended, as successor of Charles the Great and Emperor of the West, to lower him to the position of simple Bishop of Rome. Fresh complications threatened with Austria, an Imperial General having surrendered Cattaro to Russia, for which Napoleon made the Vienna Cabinet responsible. Prussia began to reap the bitter fruit of her alliance. Sweden challenged her by occupying Lauenburg, and since she

had consented to close the North Sea ports England had declared war against her, and done untold damage to her commerce. When Talleyrand raised no objection to the appearance of the manifesto in which the King of Prussia, giving way to a feeling of discouragement, told the Hanoverians that the occupation of their country was forced upon him, Napoleon wrote as follows: "En vérité, je ne puis concevoir votre manière de faire les affaires; vous voulez faire de votre chef et vous ne vous donnez pas la peine de lire les pièces et de peser les mots."

Reprimands of this kind were not a good omen for the issue of the negotiations which were once more resumed with England. Fox took the first step by giving the French Government information of a doubtful attempt against the Emperor's life. Talleyrand prepared the way for a further exchange of views by emphasising in his last review of the situation Napoleon's openly expressed willingness to treat with England on the basis of Amiens. He had no great admiration for Fox, and once called him "a sophist, who must be left in the clouds." But the responsibilities of office had already produced a sobering effect on Fox. He declared that he could only act in concert with Russia, to whom he was bound by the treaty of 1805, and demanded Hanover and recognition of the *status quo* by both countries. In May Talleyrand expressed a wish to convey confidential communications to London by

means of Lord Yarmouth, who had just been released from arrest at Verdun. Yarmouth stated that the restitution of Hanover was a *sine qua non*, whereupon Talleyrand after some hesitation replied that there would be no difficulty about Hanover. When Yarmouth referred to Sicily the Minister remarked that the English were in possession of it already, that France did not want it, as it would only add to her difficulties. As at Brünn and Pressburg, Talleyrand urged acceleration of the negotiations, if they were to accomplish their object. Changes, he said, were impending in the East and in Germany, which might be prevented at the last moment. Yarmouth went to London, and by the 16th of June was back in Paris, where he found the situation had altered for the worse. Napoleon was ready to let England have the Cape, but demanded Sicily, which he thought he ought to have "because his brother Joseph declared it was indispensable for the security of Naples." England could be indemnified by Malta and other equivalents, and the King of Sicily by the Hanseatic towns! The real explanation of this change of tone was that a Russian diplomatist was on his way to Paris. In the only note of Napoleon's dealing with the Yarmouth negotiations, which is post-dated the 6th of July, he orders his Minister for Foreign Affairs to deal separately with each cabinet, and to tell the Berlin Government that the Emperor would never dispose of Hanover otherwise than as the mouthpiece

of Prussia's own views. Talleyrand accordingly sent a brief despatch to Berlin stating that France refused to restore Hanover.

The growing disquietude, however, provoked in Berlin by the impending formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, led to the Duke of Brunswick's secret mission to St. Petersburg. The result of his efforts was that the Emperor Alexander declared himself ready to maintain the inviolability and independence of Prussia with all the resources at his disposal, while Prussia engaged not to make war on Russia in case of a French attack on Turkey. The agreement was signed on the 1st of July. About the same time Oubril, the former Russian *chargé d'affaires*, who had been for some time in Vienna, arrived in Paris with orders to anticipate the peace with England by overtures for a separate peace with Russia. The instructions given him by Czartorysky were designedly of so vague a character that Oubril might well think himself empowered to conclude a treaty. An episode took place, similar to that of which St. Julien was a victim. The Russian plenipotentiary, physically and morally worried to death, signed the treaty of July 20th, 1806. Russia was to quit Cattaro, the French evacuate Germany, and a secret article provided that the son and heir of King Ferdinand IV. of Naples should be indemnified by the Balearic Islands at the expense of Spain, in case of the loss of Sicily. Oubril stated afterwards that he signed

on Talleyrand's threat that, if he refused, Austria would be attacked afresh and annihilated. But there were other motives at work. Russia was meditating an attack on Turkey, which she wished to conceal from England, and France was on the point of concerting opposition to Russia with the Porte.

While Oubril proceeded to St. Petersburg to obtain the ratification of the treaty, Talleyrand succeeded in persuading Lord Yarmouth, at the most critical moment of his mission and in contravention of the text of his instructions, to resort to the powers which he was allowed to use in certain eventualities and entertain proposals for the surrender of Sicily. During the last few months, said Talleyrand, complications had arisen through Joseph and Louis being raised to the rank of sovereigns; if there was further delay, the conquest of Portugal was likely to follow shortly. On the 9th of July he gave assurances that Napoleon would make no change in Germany, although, when he said this, he had the act of the confederation of the Rhine ready for signature, which took place a few days afterwards. Yarmouth was less discreet, and in an unguarded moment let out the plan for the restoration of Hanover to Luchesini. Up to this point the latter had in his reports to his Court repeatedly expressed confidence in Talleyrand, and had no doubt exaggerated the sympathy which Choiseul's pupil felt for Haugwitz's duodecimo edition of the polity of Frederick the Great. Haugwitz,

too, thought that Prussia had a firm friend in Talleyrand. But now, on the 6th of August, the very day on which the German Imperial Crown disappeared unnoticed from history, the Berlin Government heard through Luchesini himself of the defeat of its diplomacy, and of the collapse of the political organisation which Prussia had controlled for a period of ten years.

Napoleon had endeavoured to counteract the impression which the Confederation of the Rhine was bound to make on Frederick William III. by urging him to form one for North Germany. Since 1795 Hardenberg had been familiar with the plans by which Sieyès anticipated, even in detail, the dismemberment of Germany as it was carried out in 1806. Napoleon who insisted on Hardenberg's retirement, would have found him just as ready as Haugwitz to conclude an alliance based on Prussia's hegemony in North Germany. But the panic produced by Luchesini's news, the reports that France was intriguing to prevent Electoral Hesse and Electoral Saxony from joining Prussia and to give Bayreuth to Bavaria, and the movements of French troops, which now seemed directed against Prussia, all combined to make Haugwitz apply to the King for leave to mobilize the army.

Napoleon was as little prepared for peace with England as for warlike preparations in Prussia. There was nothing artificial about his outburst of wrath, provoked by a second intercepted despatch from

Luchesini of August 26th, urging the King to appeal to the Emperor Alexander for assistance in the crisis. "Ce coquin de Luchesini, ce misérable," was unmasked, wrote the Emperor to his Minister; he had known for a long time that nothing was easier than to deceive him, Talleyrand. The latter would have had no objection to humble Prussia to the dust, if the road to peace with England had lain over her prostrate form. However, he came to the conclusion that a policy of this kind had no chance of success when Fox despatched Lord Lauderdale to Paris to support, and soon afterwards to succeed, Yarmouth, and the negotiations were replaced on the old footing of *uti possidetis*.

But once a rupture with England was unavoidable there was no immediate reason for quarrelling with Prussia. During the month of August, hesitation and a desire for peace once more prevailed over the ardour of the patriotic party in Berlin. Luchesini of course had to be recalled, but his place was to be taken by General von Knobelsdorff. This was the position of affairs when Talleyrand stated, in one of his last interviews with Luchesini, that France could not allow the Hanse towns to enter the North German Confederation. After this intimation, which the King called "a piece of impudence" in his letter to Alexander of September 6th, it was idle to make light of the panic in Berlin, although Talleyrand, who endeavoured to do so, argued cogently enough that Napoleon had met the Austrian

Emperor's consent to the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine by ordering his troops to evacuate Germany. But at this point news came from St. Petersburg which changed the whole face of affairs. The Tsar repudiated the treaty of July 20th, and replaced Czartorysky by Budberg, an open enemy of France. Talleyrand had written to Napoleon on the 27th of August that if Alexander ratified the treaty, peace was assured. On the 28th Haugwitz wrote, on hearing of the refusal to ratify, that this meant war. Napoleon believed, or pretended to believe, in the existence of a new coalition, and replied to Knobelsdorff's request for the evacuation of Germany by a demand that Prussia should disarm. Fox died on the 13th of September. Austria was neutral, and Russia not ready. Prussia had two allies, Saxony and Hesse-Cassel; Napoleon was completely isolated. He began to take into consideration the advantages of an Austrian alliance, which was the foundation of Talleyrand's programme before Austerlitz and Pressburg, and decided to make overtures in Vienna based on the integrity of Turkey. But the terrible humiliation which Austria had experienced made her answer (which turned out to be a refusal) too probable for Napoleon not to be convinced of the necessity of striking a decisive blow at Prussia without delay, and on the 25th of September he left Paris suddenly for Mayence, accompanied by the Empress and Talleyrand.

Since the 6th of July the latter had been raised to the rank of Prince of Benevento, at the expense of the Pope, to whom this Neapolitan fief belonged. "It is painful to have to part from the two persons whom one loves the most," said Napoleon to Monsieur de Rémusat, as he bade a tearful farewell to Joséphine and Talleyrand, on starting to open the campaign. "On vous adore," wrote Talleyrand to him. They met again in Berlin, after the battle of Jena, and their estrangement began.

Even at this stage Haugwitz's and Luchesini's last hopes of saving the fallen Prussia from annihilation rested on Talleyrand, "ce ministre éclairé." He was not alone in his opinion that the moral effect on the conqueror of a victory like that of 1806 was equivalent to a disaster. Duroc and Caulaincourt also thought that peace would have been made if Magdeburg had held out. Napoleon was aware of these views, and kept Talleyrand at a distance. D'Hauterive, Prussia's sworn enemy, drew up memoranda against her, and La Besnardière wrote the draft of a proclamation deposing the House of Brandenburg, a threat which Talleyrand also made when he had to force Prussia into an alliance after the battle of Eylau. The 19th bulletin, which was a deadly insult to the Queen, was published before his arrival in the Prussian capital. The Berlin Decree, which gathered up the whole Napoleonic policy into one monstrous act of retaliation

on England, and was described by Napoleon himself as "contrary to the spirit of the age," was put into the Minister's hands ready drawn. The events which involved Russia in a war with the Porte were set in motion by Napoleon, who sent Sebastiani on a mission to Constantinople in August. The treaties with Persia and Turkey, at which Talleyrand worked for months at Warsaw, and for which he once more endeavoured to gain Austria's support, were concluded by the Emperor without his assistance, through the instrumentality of Maret. The peace with Saxony, which was signed at Posen on the 11th of December, was his only independent diplomatic act. Saxony was raised to the rank of a kingdom, and joined the Confederation of the Rhine, the Saxon duchies following her example. Talleyrand fixed the strength of their contingents and the limits of their powers. He takes credit to himself for having prolonged the existence of Anhalt, Lippe, Waldeck, Reuss, and Schwarzburg, by including them in the Confederation.

In Warsaw fresh complications awaited him. Napoleon's declaration to the deputies of the Palatinate of Posen, "La France n'a jamais reconnu le partage de la Pologne," conjured up the phantom of Polish independence before the partitioning powers. Rulhière's "Histoire de l'Anarchie en Pologne," which was written for Choiseul, appeared fourteen years after the author's death. Gentz considered it the best French historical

work, and it made Talleyrand revert to the traditions of the monarchy: "La Pologne, s'il y a une Pologne, recouvrira la liberté d'avoir et d'exprimer une opinion," he wrote to d'Hauterive from Posen. Madame de Rémusat bears witness that he always clung to the idea of establishing a kingdom of Poland as a barrier against Russian ambition. But there is no proof that he ever thought the Poles capable of profiting by their opportunity. Gagern, who was on intimate terms with him at Warsaw during the winter of 1807, says that his unfairness to them bordered on animosity. He quotes his remark that he had never played cards with a Pole without being cheated; when Gagern asked jokingly, "Qu'est ce que cela prouve?" he replied, "C'est qu'il ne faut pas jouer avec eux, mais se jouer d'eux." He knew that this was exactly what the Emperor was doing when he promised them their country's freedom in return for their troops. "Le sort de la Pologne dépend des évènements," wrote Napoleon to his Minister, who called Warsaw a city split into factions, "où toute la journée je vais au-devant de tous les amours propres." The women tried their hand when the men did not succeed; they began with politics, but soon dropped them, and, to quote Madame de Rémusat once more, caught "the complaint of falling in love with Talleyrand." Poniatowsky's sister, Countess Tyszkiewitz, followed him to Paris. But on this occasion the four million florins which were de-

posited with Dalberg for several days were of no avail. Talleyrand would not be converted to an independent Poland, and after Tilsit and the cession of the Duchy of Warsaw to the King of Saxony, Count Senfft was advised not to spend any Saxon money on Poland. Consideration for Austria's interests in Galicia would alone have sufficed to make Talleyrand adopt this policy.

In the course of the winter of 1806—1807 the Vienna Cabinet was in a position similar to that of Prussia just before Austerlitz. Pozzo di Borgo, Napoleon's fellow-countryman and avowed enemy, brought Alexander's proposals to Vienna; the English ambassador Adair was strongly in favour of warlike action, and Prussia referred with the same object to her own temporising policy in 1805 as a warning. Napoleon knew that the issue of the battlefield would alone influence Austria's ultimate decision. But when General Baron Vincent arrived in Warsaw on the 8th of January, 1807, on behalf of the Emperor Francis, he used all his arts of seduction to win him over to the idea of a future alliance. He denied that he contemplated violent changes in Poland and Galicia, and promised to deal tenderly with Prussia and make peace with Russia, provided that the latter gave up her Eastern schemes, as she had promised to do in Vienna. "Il faut que tout cela finisse par un système avec la Russie ou par un système avec l'Autriche," he said to

Talleyrand. But the Emperor's statements confirmed the latter more and more in the conviction that it was not Austria with whom he seriously contemplated an alliance. While the French ambassador in Vienna, Andreossy, fed Napoleon's mistrust of Stadion and the policy of the Imperial Court, Talleyrand warned Austria through Vincent of the dangerous gift of the Danubian principalities, which he had offered himself at Pressburg, but which Napoleon now proposed as an equivalent for Galicia, after having suggested Prussian Silesia with the same object. Talleyrand was most anxious that the Austrian Government should make definite arrangements with regard to the East; he even went further, and on the 18th of February said to Vincent in a very agitated tone, "The Emperor is really hostile only to Austria, and my difficulties are unceasing." The Vienna Cabinet was warned, and shielded itself with armed neutrality and afterwards with offers of mediation, which were abruptly terminated by the battle of Friedland and Alexander's unexpected change of front at Tilsit.

There can be no doubt that Talleyrand's policy was to restrain Napoleon's boundless ambition by separate treaties, for Prussia found him just as ready to come to terms as Austria. Gagern says that he never saw him in better humour than after Eylau, "bataille un peu gagnée," when he was empowered to offer Prussia, comparatively speaking, acceptable conditions of peace,

which failed through Frederick William's loyal adherence to the Russian alliance, drawn closer by the treaty of Bartenstein on the 26th of April. Talleyrand prophesied shrewdly enough that Russia would throw over her ally.

In the meanwhile the hardships of the winter campaign prevented all diplomatic action, and Talleyrand was entrusted with the commissariat of the army in addition to his ordinary official duties. He had to test the rhetorical devotion of the Polish nobles by their practical capacity to supply provisions and transport, and his correspondence with the Emperor contains almost daily references to the despatch of spirits and rice, of corn and biscuit. At Posen Barante found him lodged in a wretched hovel, and on the road to Warsaw his carriage remained stuck in the mud for twenty-three hours. Gagern thinks that this interference with his personal comfort made him inclined to be disloyal, but Gagern also states that everybody around him, from the faithful Daru to the rough Augereau, was grumbling, and that the prevailing wish was, "to be rid of Napoleon."

To all outward appearances the Emperor and his Minister were still on good terms. One evening when the Emperor, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep at his work, Talleyrand spent the whole night on his chair without stirring, in order not to wake him. But between the Cæsar who aspired to universal rule, and

the statesman who believed in the doctrine of a balance of power in Europe, a great gulf was fixed. The most difficult part of his business, he told Madame de Rémusat, was to deal with the Emperor, and the latter was escaping him more and more. His avowal to Gagern, "Je ne veux pas être le bourreau de l'Europe," and the dawn of the idea of recalling the Bourbons in case of Napoleon's death, do not necessarily imply the presumption of treachery. D'Hauterive had written before Jena: "If we retreat now, our path will lead us through ruin and disaster back to the old monarchy." A few months afterwards, at Warsaw, Gagern paid a visit to his friend Talleyrand one morning when he was dressing. It was after the battle of Eylau; they discussed the situation, and the German diplomatist raised the question as to what would be done if anything happened to the Emperor, then considered the various contingencies, and finally came to the conclusion that Europe could not be restored to tranquillity without the recall of the Bourbons, who would fall into the old groove at once. "And a man in your position," added Gagern, "a prudent man like you, ought to have some connection with Hartwell." Talleyrand answered immediately, "The Archbishop of Rheims is my uncle." Hartwell was the English residence which Louis XVIII. had selected when he was expelled from Mittau, and Talleyrand, the Archbishop of Rheims, was his inseparable companion. Gagern, however,

always thought that the Prince of Benevento contemplated the possibility of a restoration of the Bourbons from this moment. Nor had Napoleon even at the zenith of his power ceased to think of them, although they seemed forgotten by the world. He was pleased to hear Alexander say at Tilsit that he had visited the head of the family at Mittau, and found him the greatest nonentity in Europe. There were personal as well as political reasons for the estrangement between Napoleon and his Minister. Napoleon reproached him with carelessness and arbitrariness in the execution of orders, and, according to Meneval, complained that important documents found their way abroad during his tenure of office. Talleyrand knew that the Emperor deliberately deceived him, that a tool was all he wanted, and that ambition and passion, "et quelques imbéciles qu'il écoute," blinded him. "Il me soupçonne dès que je lui parle modération, et s'il cesse de me croire, vous verrez par quelles imprudentes sottises il se compromettra, lui et nous," he said to Madame de Rémusat in the autumn of 1807. Still he considered himself bound to stand by the Empire up to the end, so long as it held out a prospect of rescuing the result of his own labours from destruction. Where he drew the line was, according to d'Hauterive, at Napoleon's nepotism and the monarchies of his relations, for whom he had the profoundest contempt, saying that their ephemeral dynasties began where others generally

leave off. He aimed a blow at them in his final programme of 1807, which was based on the triple division of Germany into Prussia, Austria, and the Confederation of the Rhine, on the erection of a kingdom of Poland under Saxon sovereignty, and on an independent Italian state ruled by a prince of the House of Bavaria. He told Napoleon plainly what he thought: "The victory of your Majesty," he wrote after Friedland, "is all the more welcome because I hope it is the last which the Emperor will be obliged to win over his enemies." If peace is not signed in a fortnight, remarked Savary, Napoleon will cross the Niemen. "And why cross the Niemen?" rejoined Talleyrand. He held in his hands a despatch, in which the Emperor said that only women and children could imagine that he would lose himself in the wilds of Russia.

The armistice was signed, the preliminary interviews between Napoleon, Alexander, and the King of Prussia had taken place, and the simultaneous arrival of the news of the Sultan Selim's dethronement had facilitated Napoleon's transition from the Turkish to the Russian alliance, when Talleyrand was summoned to Tilsit. There he found his functions were limited to drafting an agreement, on which he was not consulted, and to signing, on the 7th and 9th of July, treaties which recalled the schemes of the Emperor Paul and the combinations of 1801. He did not, however, remain completely passive at Tilsit. The key of the situation

was that Alexander suddenly, and apparently without a struggle, yielded to the ascendency of the masterful genius, who promised to share the whole world, from the Indus to the Tagus, with him, on condition that he would join in raising it against England. From that moment the centre of gravity was no longer to be found in the text of the treaties, but in the humours and caprices of two autocrats. Diplomacy was controlled by psychological considerations. Tilsit was the present, but Talleyrand was not duped by it, even in the moment of victory. Erfurt was destined to be the future, and he prepared the way for it: "I saw Alexander several times alone," he says in his Memoirs. What passed between them is not known, but Bernhardi points out that the wording of the Tsar's refusal to deprive his abandoned Prussian ally of Memel implies that he had consented to it in the first instance. And Napoleon's subsequent admission, that "in making this proposal he intended to beguile Alexander into a dishonourable act," warrants the conclusion that the latter had received a timely warning.

It speaks volumes for Talleyrand's unrivalled power of dealing with his fellow-men that, even after all that had happened, the confidence of Prussian statesmen in the moderation of his views and in his personal goodwill remained unshaken. It was not till they heard from his lips that better terms were not to be obtained

that they decided to conclude the peace which cost Prussia the half of her kingdom. The testimony of Queen Louise is more eloquent than that of Goltz and Kalkreuth. Her remark to Napoleon at Tilsit: "Sire, la gloire de Frédéric II. nous avait égarés sur notre propre puissance," produced an effect on Talleyrand which did not escape her. "Prince of Benevento," she said, when taking leave of him from her travelling carriage, to which he had conducted her, "you and I are the only persons who will regret that I came here. I know you will allow me to take away this impression with me." The tears came into Talleyrand's eyes.

A month afterwards, in Paris, he resigned his office, to all appearances in complete accord with the Emperor, and for the reason that it was incompatible with the dignity of *Vice-grand électeur* now conferred on him. He was succeeded by mere tools, officially by Champagny, whose yielding weakness even Talleyrand's adversary Pasquier stigmatises as a misfortune; and for personal business by Maret, whose devotion was unbounded, and of whom Talleyrand used to say after his elevation to a dukedom that with the exception of the Duke of Bassano he did not know a greater donkey than Maret.

The way in which Talleyrand presented the staff of the Foreign Office to his successor was thoroughly characteristic: "Monsieur, voici bien des gens recom-

mandables et dont vous serez content. Vous les trouverez habiles, exacts, mais grâce à mes soins, nullement zélés." Remarking Champagny's astonishment he proceeded: "Oui, Monsieur, hors quelques petits expéditionnaires qui font, je pense, leurs enveloppes avec un peu de précipitation, tous ici ont le plus grand calme . . . . Quand vous aurez à traiter en peu de temps les intérêts de l'Europe avec l'Empereur, vous verrez combien il est important de ne se point hâter de sceller et d'expédier trop vite ses volontés."

Talleyrand entertained the Emperor with a description of this scene, which was the origin of the *mot* so often ascribed to him, "surtout point de zèle."

Lamartine calls Talleyrand the "courtisan du destin." Mignet points out that in Talleyrand's eyes there was no such thing as undeserved failure in politics. Napoleon fancied that he was merely ridding himself of an inconvenient Minister, but in dismissing him he bade adieu to his own good fortune.

CHAPTER XVI.

BAYONNE, ERFURT, AND TALLEYRAND'S OPPOSITION.

1807—1812.

EVEN at the time of Talleyrand's retirement, no doubt was entertained that graver reasons than mere questions of etiquette lay at the bottom of it. On the other hand, no statement of his has met with more contradiction than the reason which he alleges for it. "Napoleon," he writes in his Memoirs, "had arrived in Berlin when he received an imprudent proclamation of the Prince de la Paix, apparently announcing the impending revolt of Spain. On that occasion he swore that he would destroy the Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon, and I also registered a mental oath that I would resign as soon as I returned to France. I was confirmed in this resolve by his barbarous conduct to Prussia at Tilsit, although he never made me an instrument of it."

To this the best-informed persons reply that Talleyrand, so far from dissuading Napoleon from interference in Spanish affairs, approved of it at the outset, even if he did not instigate it, and only condemned it when

it turned out a failure. "Truth compels me to state," writes d'Hauterive's biographer, relying on d'Hauterive's testimony, "that Talleyrand was in favour of the expedition on certain conditions." But he goes on to quote a statement of Talleyrand's made in 1807, which quite confirms that made in the Memoirs: "The annihilation of Prussia is not complete; Spain will be overthrown, but will rise again. Napoleon has abandoned the cause of peoples, and is bent only on personal glory. He has entered on the fatal path of nepotism, where I shall decline to follow him." Metternich also, in a despatch to Stadion of July 13th, 1808, traces Talleyrand's opposition to Napoleon's policy in 1806 and the campaign against Prussia. On the other hand, Talleyrand's opponent, Pasquier, states that it was he who instigated the Spanish expedition, "in all probability while Napoleon was at Warsaw." He says he heard Talleyrand say repeatedly that the crown of Spain was the most precious inheritance of Louis XIV., and that the Emperor must enter on it unimpaired. The sarcasms which he poured out on Champagny and Maret were levelled, says Pasquier, at the mode in which the policy was carried out, and not at the policy itself, to which he knew he was committed by his own advice. Thiers quotes Cambacérès to throw the blame on Talleyrand. After Tilsit, says Thiers, he had forfeited Napoleon's confidence, and he regained it by his pliability in regard to Spain. Ernouf, Maret's

biographer, agrees that Talleyrand not only approved, but advocated intervention in Spain.

No one knew better than the Prince of Benevento that the spectre which had not been laid even at Tilsit, and which had unceasingly pursued Napoleon since the days of Brumaire and the Consulate, the only power which could not be defeated on the field of battle, would eventually turn the scale beyond the Pyrenees. "A prince of the House of Bourbon," said Talleyrand to Madame de Rémusat, "is a bad neighbour for Napoleon. I doubt if he will be able to leave him alone." A Bourbon on the throne of Madrid, as Napoleon repeated to General Monthyon on the way to Bayonne in almost identical terms, was a danger to which he could not expose his successor. "Explain to your Emperor," he said to Metternich in August 1808, "that ambition has not been my motive in regard to Spain, but simply and solely my position with reference to the Bourbons, and the incompatibility of their rule with mine, a question of principle, which does not apply to any other reigning house in Europe." "The Emperor," Champagny assured the Spanish diplomatist Labrador at Bayonne, "in spite of his genius, his glory, and his victorious army, could not feel secure on the throne as long as that of Spain was occupied by a Bourbon." All his surroundings, without exception, Napoleon told his Finance Minister Gaudin, were in favour of armed intervention in Spain. At

St. Helena, in the bitterness of exile, these statements took a more precise shape. Talleyrand is the man who is made responsible, not only for the murder of the Duke of Enghien, but also for the events of 1808: "He goaded me into war, although he was clever enough to pose before the public as an opponent of it," said Napoleon to Las Cases. In an autograph memorandum he goes even further, and states that Talleyrand advised him to have the Prince of Asturias and his brother Don Carlos assassinated. But Napoleon was in the habit of making wild statements. "Only those who knew him well," says one of his most loyal adherents, General Count Ségur, "can distinguish between them." He then proceeds to quote De Pradt, who was personally concerned, and to whose narrative Talleyrand also appeals, in order to prove that in 1807 the Emperor thought that the Spaniards would suffer the same fate as the Prussians at Jena. Ségur also affirms that Talleyrand, Berthier, and Daru advised the conclusion of a durable peace at Berlin in October 1806. It is not all this contradictory testimony of friend and foe, but the development of the situation in Spain itself, which throws a clear light on the circumstances which led to Napoleon's fatal decision to cross the Pyrenees.

The traditional alliance between the Cabinets of Paris and Madrid had given way before the generous feeling of indignation with which the execution of

Louis XVI. had inspired the Spanish people. Godoy, who was then a young man, had a unique opportunity of wiping out the disgrace which attached to him as having been promoted to succeed Aranda through the favour of the Queen. He missed it with that masterly incapacity which is the leading characteristic of this tragi-comic hero. Bonaparte won his first laurels against the Spaniards and English at the siege of Toulon. In July 1795 the republican armies had advanced as far as the Ebro, and a few days later Spain obtained peace with France by sacrificing her share in San Domingo. A supposed community of interests led to a renewal of the alliance which had been briefly interrupted. Spain paid for it by decline at home under the leadership of the Prince de la Paix, as he was now called. Abroad she was tied to the fortunes of the Convention and the Directory, and lost both her fleets and her colonies. Godoy had fallen from power when Bonaparte returned from Egypt, and the latter reinstated him, in order to control the Court and the country through the favourite. The plan owed its success to the creation of the kingdom of Etruria for the Bourbons in Parma, the Queen's native country, but was jeopardised by Godoy's attempts at resistance, which led him to make peace with Portugal in the teeth of France. It was on this occasion that Talleyrand was instructed by the First Consul to threaten the Spanish Bourbons with extinction. The same thing

took place in 1803, when Godoy endeavoured to remain neutral on the outbreak of war between France and England. A new treaty now bound Spain to France on the most onerous conditions, an alliance destined to end in Trafalgar.

The history of the country had been written with blood and tears. That of the Royal Family was branded with the mark of shame. The Spanish heir to the throne was eight years old when his mother and Godoy made the first attempt to exclude him from the succession, in 1792. In 1801 Talleyrand promised him French protection against any schemes of this kind. A year afterwards, however, Napoleon discussed with Godoy's secret agent Izquierdo the exclusion of the Prince of Asturias, who had been drawn into the hostile camp by his marriage with a princess of Naples. She was dead when Godoy, who knew that his position was insecure, proposed a partition of Portugal in 1806. It was just at the time when negotiations were opened with Lord Yarmouth, and it seemed advisable to put pressure on England by threatening Portugal. On the 15th of June Izquierdo reported a counter-proposition by Talleyrand. Charles IV. was to have the title of Emperor of Spain and the Indies; Portugal was to be divided into two, or perhaps three, parts; the northern part for the King of Etruria, whose crown was claimed by Napoleon, and the southern for Godoy. The rest was to be given to Spain, to whom France guaranteed

her possessions and promised support in the war against Portugal. The House of Braganza was to go to Brazil.

Godoy assented to this plan with alacrity, but all his appeals for a settlement proved in vain after the negotiations with England were broken off and there seemed a prospect of war with Prussia. The Prince de la Paix, smarting with disappointment, resolved to change sides. He refused to recognise King Joseph of Naples, made overtures to England, and on the 6th of October issued the ill-omened proclamation which bore the same date as Jena and summoned the Spanish nation to arms against an unknown enemy. After Prussia's overthrow the only course open to him was to regain the conqueror's good graces by redoubled servility. Napoleon thought it politic to accept his advances. "Nous sommes au mieux avec l'Espagne," he wrote to Cambacérès on the 16th of November. On the 15th of December, 1806, Talleyrand asked for and obtained a Spanish contingent of fourteen thousand men, to protect the Elbe against the English.

Talleyrand's ministry came to an end six months later. At Dresden, on the return from Tilsit, he received instructions from Napoleon to demand peremptorily from Portugal the closing of her ports to England and the confiscation of all English goods, failing which twenty thousand men would march to Bayonne and conquer Portugal in concert with Spain. On the rejection of these requests, and of the demand

for arrest of all Englishmen in the country, Izquierdo and Duroc signed the secret treaty of October 27th, partitioning Portugal. Talleyrand, who at that time was acting for the Viceroy of Italy as lord high chancellor, and in that capacity had to sign all treaties, asserts in his Memoirs that this treaty was concluded without his knowledge. It was far more unfavourable to Spain than his scheme of June 1806, for Godoy and the King of Etruria obtained little more than a third of Portugal, the rest being reserved by Napoleon for future disposal at his own discretion. The latter had now made up his mind to dethrone the Pope, and had designs on the whole of Italy, including even Sicily. Russia's mediation with England, which had been arranged at Tilsit, was abruptly terminated by the victory at Copenhagen, and on the 12th of October Junot received orders to cross the Pyrenees. It was these events which led up to the treaty of October 27th. On that day the Prince of Asturias put himself in the Emperor's power by writing the letter in which he humbly implored his protection and asked for the hand of a Bonaparte. On the 28th of October he was arrested in Madrid on a charge of treasonable conspiracy.

Godoy had been for months past on the track of secret negotiations between the Prince, who fancied himself lost, and his party, who hoped to save him by making common cause with Napoleon. The life

and soul of the movement was Ferdinand's old tutor, the canon Escoquiz, who had approached the French ambassador Beauharnais and been received by him. When Ferdinand was arrested, nothing was known in Madrid of the treaty which had been signed at Fontainebleau, and of the decision which Napoleon had taken in the meanwhile to abandon the Prince's cause. On the contrary, an understanding between the two was apprehended, and, in consequence, the heir to the throne, who surrendered at discretion to Godoy, was set at liberty on the 5th of November. Napoleon crossed the Alps for the last time on his way to Milan, but despatched two more armies to Spain, at the close of November 1807 and the beginning of January 1808, while Junot advanced into Portugal. It seemed as if Godoy, who was now loaded with fresh honours by the Queen, was aspiring to the succession himself. But Izquierdo warned them of Napoleon's long-gathering wrath, while the unfortunate heir to the throne became an object of increased love and devotion to the Spanish nation. The old king became uneasy; he too asked for a Bonaparte alliance for his son, and begged that the treaty of October 27th might be made public.

Napoleon gave an evasive answer, but he took Etruria, kept Portugal for himself, and made over Finland to the Tsar, began to seriously discuss the hitherto carefully avoided question of the partition of Turkey, and sent Izquierdo back to Madrid on the

24th of February. The latter reported to Godoy that, according to Talleyrand, his removal was the object of the French invasion. "Talleyrand," writes Madame de Rémusat, "wished to win the sympathies of the nation by overthrowing Godoy. If the King refused his consent, then war would be made on him in the interests of the Spanish people, and afterwards the dynasty would be sacrificed or compromised by marriage with a Bonaparte. Talleyrand was always in favour of an open declaration of war." He himself writes: "Poussé à bout par les argumentations artificieuses de l'Empereur, je lui conseillai de faire occuper la Catalogue jusqu'à ce qu'il parvienne à obtenir la paix maritime avec l'Angleterre." A province like Catalonia and Navarre, wrote Napoleon afterwards to the Tsar, thinking of this advice, would be more useful to France than the dethronement of the dynasty. Among the Louvre documents relating to Spain, Thiers found a letter of Talleyrand's, in which he commends this plan and the marriage of Ferdinand with a French princess to the Emperor. This was in February or March, when Napoleon had quite made up his mind to dethrone the Bourbons. In Holland, in Germany, and in Italy, he had bestowed constitutions and forced Napoleonic dynasties on peoples who did not want them. Spain, on the other hand, was ruined, in the same state as France after Brumaire. Her King was an object of derision. The Queen and her favourite seemed to be

rehearsing for the romantic dramas of Ruy Blas and Lucrezia Borgia. Chateaubriand, who was destined to replace Ferdinand VII. on the throne in 1823 by means of a war, was in Madrid in 1807, and said that the Prince was "no better than Godoy." As early as 1803 foreign diplomatists had stated that Spain could only be saved by a revolution. It broke out on the 17th of March, 1808. The Royal Family, left by Napoleon in complete uncertainty as to their fate, wished to fly with Godoy, but were prevented. Charles IV. abdicated, and Ferdinand was made king. But Murat had been the real ruler of Spain since the 1st of March; on the 23rd he arrived in Madrid with his troops, where he refused to recognise Ferdinand and paid ostentatious homage to the dethroned monarch. On the 27th of March Napoleon offered the Spanish throne to his brother Louis, who refused it. On the 4th of April he arrived at Bayonne with Champagny and despatched Savary to Madrid, while Talleyrand remained in Paris to acquaint the *corps diplomatique* with the course of events. On the 20th of April Savary succeeded in accomplishing the trick known to history as the "guet-apens de Bayonne," and Ferdinand was in the Emperor's power. On the 30th of April Godoy arrived there, followed by the Spanish Royal Family. On the 1st of May Talleyrand heard from the Emperor after a long interval: "Le roi Charles a l'air d'un homme franc et bon. La reine a son cœur et son

histoire sur sa physionomie, c'est vous en dire assez. . . Le prince de la Paix a l'air d'un taureau . . . il est bon qu'on le décharge de toute imputation mensongère, mais il faut le laisser couvert d'une légère teinte de mépris. Le prince des Asturies est très-bête, très-méchant, très-ennemi da la France." On the 2nd of May a revolt broke out in Madrid. On the 9th, Talleyrand, who had just bought the country-seat of Valençay in Berry, was ordered by Napoleon to receive the three Spanish Princes with their suite of twenty persons, and entertain them until their fate was decided. Perhaps some pretty woman, wrote the Emperor, might be found for the Prince of Asturias: "Quant à vous," he concluded, "votre mission est honorable. Recevoir chez vous trois illustres personnages pour les amuser est tout-à-fait dans le caractère de la nation et dans celui de votre rang." On the 16th of May the Emperor wrote again: "Les affaires d'Espagne vont bien et vont être entièrement terminées."

The intention of the writer of these letters not only to insult but also to compromise the recipient of them was obvious. Talleyrand felt it, and also the disgraceful character of the proceedings at Bayonne. "Il y a là je ne sais quoi de vil, de la tromperie, de la tricherie," he said to Beugnot: "It is a low intrigue, an outrage on the liberties of nations, an irreparable fault," he remarked to Madame de Rémusat, who warned him to

be more careful in his language. According to his own statement when he was ordered to Nantes in August, to meet the Emperor on his way from Bayonne to Paris, he then and there told him to his face that the world would put up with a good deal, but would not stand cheating at cards. It was not the princes, he says, but he himself who felt embarrassed when he received them at his door. The old-fashioned state-coach which brought them from Madrid is still shown at Valençay. The host did what he could for his unbidden guests. His head groom put them on horseback for the first time; his keepers taught them to shoot; his cooks forgot their art in endeavouring to please them; and his own attempts at educating them, which began in the library, gradually sank to the level of a picture book. "I can hardly say," he admits, "how hopeless it all was." The Prince of Asturias stooped to congratulations on victories won over Spaniards; his confidant, the Duke of San Carlos, abused the hospitality offered him, and remained Princess Talleyrand's lover up to the end of his life. "Spain has brought us both bad luck," said the Emperor mockingly.

He could not, however, dispense with the services of the statesman who had retained the confidence of Austria after Pressburg and that of Prussia after Jena. Special orders were given that all the secret documents bearing on the negotiations with Russia should be communicated to Talleyrand, and he was sent on in advance

to Erfurt, to give an account to the Powers of Napoleon's plans for the future. The task which awaited him there had been rendered more difficult by the Emperor's diplomatic action since Tilsit. The vague hopes held out to Alexander with regard to the East were followed by an attempt to divert his ambition to northern conquests at the expense of Sweden. When the Russians, in contravention of the treaty of Tilsit, failed to evacuate the Danubian principalities, Napoleon suggested Prussian Silesia as an equivalent. This proposal, which would have made the monarchy of Frederick the Great coextensive with the frontiers of Brandenburg, left a feeling of invincible mistrust in the mind of the Tsar. To him the annihilation of Prussia was little better than the reconstruction of Poland, and, although he took Finland, his thoughts remained centred on Constantinople. On the other hand, Napoleon's present ideas pointed unmistakably to an indefinite postponement of the partition of Turkey. His policy there was on the verge of a collapse, he wrote to Talleyrand from Tilsit, but added that, although he had become an ally of Russia, he wished to remain a friend of the Porte and not proceed to extremities with her. Talleyrand also thought that the situation in Turkey could not last, but held that a solution of the Eastern question was only possible on condition of Austria joining in it. Tilsit had been the negation of this policy. Passed over by France, menaced by Russia,

her dynastic interests endangered a year afterwards by the fall of the Bourbons and the temporal power of the Pope, Austria in her isolation was straining every nerve to fight for her existence. Prussia's fate seemed sealed. In the north Bernadotte was on the point of leading the Spanish contingent against the recalcitrant King of Sweden. Napoleon reckoned on the speedy submission of Spain, and intended to take up his Oriental schemes as soon as it was achieved. "The Emperor has two ends in view," said Talleyrand to Metternich, who became ambassador in Paris in April 1809; "one is the partition of Turkey, and is based on considerations of sound policy; the other is the expedition to India, and is a romance. . . . You know how averse I am to fresh revolutions, but you also know the Emperor's character, and that nothing can influence him." The acquisition of Dalmatia after Austerlitz, and that of Cattaro and the Ionian archipelago after Tilsit, were stages on the road to the Indus by way of Persia or Egypt. The letter of February 2nd, 1808, in which his ally called on him to attack England in Asia, made the Tsar believe in the realisation of his dream of a Byzantine Empire. Napoleon admitted to Count Narbonne in 1812 that he had offered Russia Constantinople in 1808. The outbreak of the crisis in Spain prevented further action. Six months afterwards the first serious reverses of Napoleon's armies, the catastrophe at Baylen and Junot's capitula-

tion in Portugal, had completely changed the face of affairs. Napoleon withdrew his troops from the Oder to the Ebro, and agreed with Russia to evacuate Prussian territory up to the Elbe, though not without the stipulations of the convention dated the 8th of September, which pressed heavily on Prussia. The expedition to the north was given up. The question was whether Napoleon's interviews with Metternich in Paris, and Russia's ambiguous yet quasi-friendly advice in Vienna, would prevail over Stadion and the party of action. "I am convinced," wrote Metternich, "that the Emperor does not want to go to war with us at the present moment." The point was to be decided at Erfurt. It was Napoleon who first proposed this second conference in February 1808. Alexander selected Erfurt, which was occupied by the French, and at the outset made the meeting conditional on the approval of his plan for the partition of Turkey, but withdrew all conditions when it proved unacceptable in Paris.

Talleyrand arrived at Erfurt on the 24th of September, convinced that, with the exception of the conquest of Finland and the invasion of Spain, "no progress had been made since Tilsit." On the 27th he was followed by Napoleon and Alexander. The brilliance of the Dictator's suite, and the train of monarchs and magnates who awaited him, did not deceive the Prince of Benevento as to the character of the homage which adulation and interest drew from

the crowned suppliants. "Je n'ai pas vu, à Erfurt, une seule main passer noblement sur la crinière du lion," is the monumental sentence with which he describes them. Germany, however, presented to her conqueror an equal in the person of Goethe. Talleyrand was present at the audience on the morning of the 2nd of October with Berthier, Savary, and Daru. It lasted an hour; Talleyrand invited Goethe to dinner that evening, and asked him to verify the correctness of the notes of the conversation which he had taken in the morning. Goethe, as is well known, declined to communicate what passed between himself and Napoleon, on the plea that he did not want to encourage endless gossip. Talleyrand has little to add to his and Chancellor von Müller's versions. Napoleon spoke slightingly of Schiller's "History of the Thirty Years' War," said that he did not like Tacitus, praised the Duchess Louise, blamed Charles Augustus but added that he had improved; to which Goethe rejoined that the corrective administered to him had been of a somewhat severe nature. To the Emperor's question whether his fellow-countrymen were happy, Goethe replied that they had great hopes. The request to write something about the Erfurt Congress, and dedicate it to Alexander, Goethe met with the remark that he never wrote dedications on principle, in order not to have to regret them afterwards. Napoleon's criticism of Werther that he did not like the end of

the story, and Goethe's reply, "Je ne croyais pas que Votre Majesté aimât que les romans aient une fin," we know not from Talleyrand's Memoirs, but from his oral statements to Matthison and Chancellor von Müller. He left the reproduction of Napoleon's second conversation with Goethe to Müller and Wieland. His own comments reveal no power of appreciating the grandeur of the genius which appeared before him. His remarks on Talma and Raucourt, on "Mahomet" and "Iphigenia," are of a commonplace character. The tragedies of the stage paled before the living drama in which this rival of Goethe's wise Antonio was fated to turn the scales of destiny.

Whether or no Napoleon spoke the words "Vous êtes toujours Autrichien," which Talleyrand's Memoirs put into his mouth, he knew that his former Minister's policy was to postpone the Eastern question and deal tenderly with Austria. Two memoranda by d'Hauterive, and the draft convention prepared by Talleyrand under Napoleon's instructions for the Erfurt Congress, are conceived in this sense. Metternich had been aware since January that he considered a powerful Austria indispensable for the creation of a durable European settlement. "Paradoxical as it may sound," he said to Metternich, "at Tilsit I pointed out the necessity of an alliance with Austria, but Napoleon did not then share my opinion. . . . The treaty of Tilsit was only an expedient, which is now to have the force of a

regular system. It places you in a most favourable position, for each of the contracting parties stands in need of you to watch the other, and with good management and submission to the inevitable necessities of the moment you will emerge from the great struggle more successfully than any other Power." His speech to Metternich before his departure for Erfurt was made with the same object: "Nothing can take place in Europe without the Emperor of Austria being able to facilitate or thwart it. I hope to see him acting in the latter capacity at Erfurt. . . . Je regarde vos intérêts comme les miens." He sent similar hints to Vienna through Dalberg. But the Emperor Francis never came to Erfurt, and Napoleon, fearing that Austria and Russia might make common cause, declined to have Metternich. In his stead came General Vincent, a partisan of Stadion, whose apprehensions Talleyrand met with the assurance that he would exert his influence to preserve the authority and integrity of Austria.

With the boldness of long matured resolution he showed his hand in his first audience with the Tsar. "Sire, why have you come here? It is for you to save Europe by making a stand against Napoleon. The French people is civilised, but its ruler is not; the sovereign of Russia is civilised, but his people is not. The latter potentate must unite with the French people." It was the same advice which the Imperial family and Russian society, still uncompromisingly

hostile to France, was continually tendering to the Tsar. The depth of their hatred could be measured by the behaviour of the ambassador Count Tolstoi in Paris, who emphasised the opposition of the old Russian conservatives under Napoleon's eyes and in his intercourse with him, just as Kalischeff had done in the Emperor Paul's time. At a tea-party given by Princess Taxis, sister of Queen Louise, Alexander sat up till late in the night rehearsing the speeches with which he resisted Napoleon's blandishments on the following morning. If the Memoirs of the untrustworthy Count Rochechouart give a correct account of Alexander's statements, he showed himself an apt scholar. "Talleyrand," he is said to have remarked to the French *émigré*, "gave me, I must admit, excellent advice; I followed it, and to it I owe the victories of 1812." On the other hand, Count Schulenburg afterwards expressed his astonishment at the extent of Talleyrand's confidential communications, and said that an indiscretion might have cost him his head. "I have never," rejoined Talleyrand, alluding to the Princess Taxis, "been betrayed by a woman." In June 1814 he reminded the Emperor Alexander in a letter how he had revealed his inmost thoughts to him on that occasion. "The Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees," he declared at Erfurt, "are the conquests of France; the rest are only the conquests of the Emperor." Talleyrand points out that the loyal Caulaincourt, French ambassador in

St. Petersburg, agreed with his views. Vandal also adduces testimony to the effect that Caulaincourt, when consulted by Napoleon at Erfurt, deprecated ambitious schemes, and made no secret of the growing uneasiness in Russia. Talleyrand at first received instructions to promise the Danubian principalities to the Tsar on condition that he succeeded in making Austria accept the *status quo* in Naples and Spain.

Joint action with Russia against England was the keynote of Napoleon's policy at Erfurt, as it had been at Tilsit. On the Niemen he sacrificed the traditional friendship of France with Sweden and Turkey to this alliance. At Erfurt he made the conclusion of a future peace with England dependent on her acceptance of the new situation on the Continent. But he considered such a peace possible only in the case of England's losing all hope of active assistance from Austria. This tardy admission of the decisive part played by the Cabinet of Vienna was equivalent to a justification of Talleyrand's policy, but it failed to ensure Napoleon a diplomatic victory. In spite of all his official assurances Stadion remained of opinion that war was inevitable. Alexander, confirmed by Talleyrand in his own growing conviction that Austria was indispensable, gave the Emperor Francis written assurances "of sympathy for his person and with the integrity of his empire." He obtained Napoleon's consent to the annexation of the Danubian principalities without

making the hoped-for return of an aggressive demonstration against Austria. The only case in which he bound himself to take the field on behalf of Napoleon was if Austria began a new fourth war against France as the ally of England.

To all outward appearances the Franco-Russian alliance was drawn closer than ever at Erfurt; but in reality it already bore the germ of dissolution within it. Napoleon turned his attention to Spain, to reconquer the lost throne for his brother Joseph, and while he did so Talleyrand made the significant statement to Metternich: "Alexandre n'est plus entraînable contre vous." It was the charter for the campaign of 1809, although all intention of taking the offensive was disclaimed at Vienna. There was now no doubt both there and at St. Petersburg that Talleyrand had ceased to be an unconditional supporter of Napoleon, and that in the future he would look far less to him than to the continental Powers to secure the safety of France.

The change was by no means a sudden one. Prepared at Pressburg, resolved on at Berlin, started at Warsaw, barely concealed from public view after Bayonne, and completed under the seal of confidential communications at Erfurt, it was still not incompatible with the idea of Napoleonic rule, provided that Napoleon consented to be saved by "his principal servant and antagonist," as Metternich expresses it. There was no question of loyalty in a monarchical

sense, or of devotion to the interests of the dynasty: "Say what you like about my brothers and my whole family; they are of no consequence for France," are the words which Talleyrand puts in Napoleon's mouth before he sent him to Erfurt on the most confidential of all his missions, to discuss the Emperor's proposed re-marriage with Alexander. At all events, Napoleon knew perfectly well what the Prince of Benevento's opinion was of his brothers, of Joseph, or Jérôme, and that he had not the remotest idea of advocating a Bonapartist succession in case anything happened to the Emperor. There was no reason to blame him for it, for Napoleon himself looked at the divorce from Joséphine in the light of a sacrifice imposed on him by the certainty that without a son to succeed him his empire was bound to crumble into ruin.

The word "disloyalty" has been applied to Talleyrand's conduct at Erfurt, but curiously enough not by Napoleon. The secret of the confidential communications made by his ex-Minister to Metternich, Vincent, and Alexander, was so well kept, that Napoleon never quite ascertained what passed between them. Meneval, who knew his master so well, states that he was under the spell of Alexander when he died; his weighty testimony bears out the view that both at Tilsit and at Erfurt Alexander was a practical politician, and by no means the dreamy dupe which the world had so long considered him. As for Talleyrand, he took

special credit to himself afterwards for having distinguished between the cause of the Emperor and that of France on this occasion. The welfare of the state supplied him with ample justification. Faint as his recollection of 1789 was, completely sobered as he had been by the failure of the attempt to realise the revolutionary ideal of liberty in a constitutional monarchy, yet the principle still survived that it was the nation which conferred the right of sovereignty, and that the conqueror of Brumaire ruled only by virtue of a popular mandate. From the moment that a new conflict of interests arose between the chief of the state and his mandatories, the welfare of France outweighed his ambition, and patriotism enjoined what private morality could not sanction. A similar dilemma had proved the ruin of the Monarchy by the grace of God, the last representative of which had been anointed at Rheims in Talleyrand's presence "with the small vial," as La Fayette used to say. There was no inducement to him to invest the rule of Bonaparte with the prestige which had not preserved the consecrated King from destruction.

There remained his personal relations with the Emperor. Talleyrand was known to be incapable of giving up his brilliant position, and the pecuniary advantages connected with it. As late as 1810, two years after Erfurt, the Emperor's generous intervention saved him from an impending financial catastrophe.

He admitted his obligation, and wrote as follows, even in 1831 : "Si je crois maintenant, comme en 1814, la politique Napoléonienne dangereuse pour mon pays, je ne puis oublier ce que je dois à l'Empereur Napoléon, et c'est une raison suffisante pour témoigner toujours aux membres de sa famille un intérêt fondé sur la reconnaissance, mais qui ne peut exercer d'influence sur mes sentiments politiques." He pursued the same course when he still possessed Napoleon's full confidence for the delicate matter which was discussed at Erfurt.

For a year past the name of a Russian princess had been connected with the Emperor's matrimonial schemes, although it was known that the Emperor Paul's widow, who had to decide as to her daughter's future, was entirely averse to an alliance with Napoleon. In Paris, Fouché warmly embraced the idea of a divorce, and in 1808 went so far as to suggest that Joséphine should take the initiative. A year later she was expected to do still more and take the first step in negotiating an Austrian alliance through Countess Metternich. But Fouché had been too impetuous. The Emperor yielded to the tears of the wife of his youth, and threw over his Minister of Police.

Talleyrand went to work more carefully. He referred to the necessity of preserving the softening influence of Joséphine, and conveyed to her the advice "to obey, but not to facilitate anything." Madame de Rémusat,

however, doubted his sincerity in the matter. She says that he was in favour of a grand alliance, to be negotiated by himself, and of celebrating the second marriage immediately after the divorce,—a piece of advice which was afterwards actually followed. In the course of a confidential communication at Erfurt Napoleon gave him to understand that the welfare of the state required that he should be succeeded by a son: "I know," he added, "that you are in favour of a divorce, and I warn you that Joséphine knows it too." Talleyrand, divining his intention, protested, but offered to broach the subject to the Tsar. "But," he adds, "I feared the effect upon Europe of this new tie between Russia and France." On the following day he conferred with Alexander, who grasped the situation at once. Napoleon was to be humoured for the present; he had his eye on the Princess Catharine, who was eighteen years of age; the Tsar spoke of his younger sister Anna, who was only fourteen, thus gaining time and not committing himself for the future.

Three months elapsed. The Spaniards had been defeated, but the country was not conquered or the people subdued, and England's resistance was still unbroken, when Napoleon arrived at the Tuileries from Valladolid on the 22nd of January, 1809, having hurried on in advance of his escort. The atmosphere abroad foreboded a storm. England had met the Erfurt communication from the two Emperors, inviting her to

discuss terms of peace, with the counter-proposition that all her allies, not only the kings of Naples, Portugal, and Sweden, but also the Spanish rebels, should join in the proceedings on the same footing with the other Powers. Although this reply put an end to all hopes of an understanding, yet Talleyrand advised Champagny, who was hesitating, and Alexander's minister Roumantsioff, who was then in Paris, to submit the proposal to the Emperor. Upon its rejection the Canning Ministry broke off all negotiations.

In the meanwhile the news of Austria's preparations became more alarming every day, and at the same time a fresh revolution was announced from Constantinople, which caused apprehensions of an outbreak of anarchy. In St. Petersburg Alexander was entertaining the King and Queen of Prussia, and by his influence succeeded in persuading the King to abstain for the sake of peace from all intervention in favour of Austria, for which the patriotic party was clamouring. When, however, Napoleon requested him to take strong measures in Vienna, the Tsar would only agree to make representations, which he said would be most effective if conveyed by moderate persons such as Talleyrand or Roumantsioff in Vienna itself, or Metternich in Paris, and would certainly suffice to restrain Austria from taking the offensive. Caulaincourt was instructed to assure Talleyrand of Alexander's special

regard. On his return from Erfurt the Tsar had complied with one of Talleyrand's fondest wishes, by asking for the hand of the youngest daughter of Princess Charlotte Dorothea, widow of the last Duke of Courland, for his nephew, Edmond de Périgord. From this time the Prince of Benevento remained in secret correspondence with Alexander through Nesselrode, then secretary of embassy and afterwards chancellor, and Speranski. Pasquier states positively that Nesselrode brought a letter of introduction from the Tsar to Talleyrand when he came to Paris in 1809. On the 20th of January Metternich sent word to Vienna that Talleyrand was agreed that Austria should not let Napoleon steal a march upon her, if he had made up his mind to declare war. Meanwhile, vague reports of Talleyrand's relations with foreign Powers and (chiefly through La Valette) the details of his ostentatious reconciliation with Fouché, had reached the ears of the Emperor.

Events had parted Talleyrand and Fouché, without ever completely separating them. They had a mutual dislike for, and yet were indispensable to, each other. The vulgarity of the one jarred on the frivolity of the other; Fouché never lost the taint of the Jacobin, and Talleyrand retained the Voltairian's aristocratic instinct of domination. But no crisis occurred in France without Fouché having a finger in the pie. Although he had supported the *coup d'état* of Brumaire, he was

a violent opponent of the Consulate for life. After the attempt with the infernal machine Talleyrand had joined in unjustly accusing him of endangering the First Consul's life by his relations with the Jacobins. But the estrangement was not a lasting one, for Talleyrand wrote confidentially to Fouché at the time of the catastrophe of Vincennes. Then fresh differences of opinion supervened, until Hauterive effected a reconciliation between them. They both were now of one mind in condemning the expedition to Spain; both of them had come to the conclusion in 1809, just as in 1800, after the battle of Marengo, that they must secure themselves against all eventualities, in case the Emperor fell by the dagger of a fanatic. "They are like passengers," wrote Metternich to Vienna, "who see the helm in the hands of a reckless pilot steering straight for the reefs, and they are ready to seize the tiller as soon as the first shock knocks down the helmsman." Fouché, says Barante, thought of Murat or Eugène Beauharnais. Metternich's insinuations, repeated by Stadion, to the effect that Talleyrand contemplated a change of régime as early as 1809, proved to be decidedly premature. The Emperor, however, vented the whole force of his wrath upon him, and not without excellent reason.

In December, after the victory of Somo Sierra, he had received a letter from Talleyrand in Madrid, the only one of this period which escaped the subsequent

intended destruction of compromising documents, and which is mentioned in Pasquier's Memoirs and was afterwards printed in Napoleon's correspondence with Talleyrand. In a tone of unchanged admiration the latter referred to the well-grounded hope that, "after such brilliant victories, the beneficent acts of a wise and fortunate government would be successful in securing the loyal devotion of Spain." The writer concluded by advising the Emperor to suppress certain tendencies towards opposition in the legislative body by a gradual but consistent transformation of it on monarchical lines. The French national character, he remarked, was not suited to representative government. Directly afterwards Napoleon heard that Talleyrand's sarcastic comments on the Spanish expedition were going the round of Paris. He made up his mind at once. Four-and-twenty hours after his return, on the 23rd of January, in the presence of Decrès, Minister of Marine, and the great dignitaries of the Crown, and with a voice the furious accents of which were heard in the antechamber, he poured a torrent of abuse on the head of Talleyrand, and almost proceeded to acts of personal violence. "Talleyrand," he said to Roederer a few days afterwards, "Talleyrand betrayed me on the first opportunity that offered. During my absence he told people that he had gone down on his knees to me to prevent the Spanish expedition, whereas he has been urging me to undertake it for the last two

years, and stating that a force of twenty thousand men would be sufficient for the purpose. This he has demonstrated in more than twenty memorandums. He did just the same thing in the case of the Duke of Enghien. I did not know the Duke and was ignorant of his whereabouts. It was Talleyrand who told me, and after he had advised me to make away with the Duke, he went about lamenting the event to all his friends. I mean him no harm, and I intend to leave him in possession of his dignities; I even retain my old feelings for him; I have only deprived him of the privilege of having access to me at all hours. I mean to stop him from being able to say that he endeavoured to dissuade me from this and that."

"Quel dommage qu'un si grand homme soit si mal élevé!" was all that the eye-witnesses of the scene heard from Talleyrand. The calmness with which the affronts were received amazed old Roumantsioff even more than their enormity. It was not the first time that this calmness had been put to the test; reference has been made above to the openly expressed displeasure with which Talleyrand was greeted by Napoleon before the assembled Ministers when he delivered the English ultimatum in the spring of 1803. On the evening of January 24th, at the Duchess de Laval's, he related what had taken place: "Vous ne m'aviez pas dit que le duc de San Carlos était l'amant de votre femme!" Napoleon had remarked. "En

effet, Sire," was Talleyrand's reply, "je n'avais pas pensé que ce rapport pût intéresser la gloire de Votre Majesté ni la mienne." "And he said that, and you did not lay hold of the tongs, or a bit of wood, or anything that came handy! You did not rush at him!" exclaimed the Duchess in a tone of horror: "J'y ai bien songé, mais je suis trop paresseux pour cela," was the reply. Marshal Lannes in his rough soldier fashion gave his conduct another name. Napoleon deprived the Prince of Benevento of his dignity of Grand Chamberlain. Then everything remained as before externally, but the dismissed statesman was no longer consulted. After the peace of Vienna, when La Besnardière called on Talleyrand after his return from headquarters, the latter asked whether the Emperor ever mentioned him. "Never," was the answer. Then, correcting himself, he said that on one occasion he had alluded to him under the following circumstances. Napoleon was complaining that Champagny could not find out what the Austrians were really ready to cede: "Tenez," he added with an oath, "si j'avais envoyé cet autre, je suis sûr que je saurais déjà ce qu'ils ont dans le ventre." When the King of Saxony came to Paris in November 1809, he even thought that Talleyrand would be taken into favour again, but the latter soon ceased to regard such a consummation as desirable, and contented himself with employing such interest as he had left on behalf of his friends.

It was at his suggestion that Count Senfft, whose wife was a niece of Stein's, applied, after the latter's disgrace, direct to Napoleon for the restoration of his sequestrated property to his wife and daughter. The appeal was unsuccessful. But at all events it was a proof of interest in the fate of the great patriot, whose own king in the hour of his misfortune, instead of giving him active sympathy, complained that his revolutionary policy had been one of the principal causes of the fall of Prussia. When shortly afterwards, in June 1810, Napoleon got wind of the negotiations opened by his brother Louis, King of Holland, and afterwards conducted by Fouché on his own responsibility through the financier Ouvrard, with a view to arrive at an understanding with England, he asked the assembled Ministers and dignitaries what punishment this treason against the State deserved. Most of those present expressed themselves most strongly as to the magnitude of the offence. Cambacérès ventured to remark that the culprit had been misled by misdirected zeal; Talleyrand, who was suspected of complicity with Fouché, but against whom no proof could be adduced, listened in silence with an indifferent smile. When the Emperor went on to ask who was to replace Fouché, and no answer was forthcoming, Talleyrand, turning to his neighbour, said loud enough to be heard by the rest: "Sans doute, M. Fouché a eu grand tort, et moi je lui donnerais un remplaçant, mais

un seul, c'est M. Fouché lui-même." The remark gave offence, and Savary, now Duke of Rovigo, was appointed to succeed Fouché as Minister of Police. Napoleon afterwards rightly regarded the dismissal of the Duke of Otranto as one of the causes which led to the fall of the Empire. The threads which were then dropped could not be picked up; the secrets of many years, which could only be deciphered by the great expert in conspiracies, were lost; in short, the whole hidden machinery of this subterranean administration would not act in less experienced hands, and Fouché's place was really just as little filled as Talleyrand's.

The latter maintained a critical if not hostile attitude. "I pity you, whose business it is 'd'amuser l'inamusable,'" he said to Rémusat, the intendant of the Emperor's theatre. When somebody asked him what he thought of Pichegru's end, his answer now was that "it came very suddenly and just at the right time." He used to say that the Emperor had been compromised from the moment when he could do a quarter of an hour sooner what he, Talleyrand, would have induced him to do a quarter of an hour later. He even thought Wagram an obstacle to the consolidation of Napoleon's power. But the latter interrupted the Minister Lacuée, Count of Cessac, who voted against an Austrian alliance, "because Austria had ceased to be a great power," with the exclamation: "Comment, Monsieur . . . on voit que vous n'étiez pas à Wagram!" These

words were uttered during the Council of January 28th, 1810, at which Napoleon consulted the Ministers and grand dignitaries on the choice of a future Empress. When he summoned it, Caulaincourt's last despatches from St. Petersburg, received within four-and-twenty hours, had confirmed the long-prevailing apprehension that Alexander's delay was caused by his intention to refuse to bestow the hand of the Grand Duchess Anna, which he eventually did. For some weeks Napoleon had sanctioned the preliminaries for the alliance with Austria which was to anticipate this refusal. The meeting of January 28th was designed for the outside world, which believed that the Emperor was still in a position to choose between a Saxon, a Russian, and an Austrian alliance. With the exception of Champagny and Napoleon himself, Talleyrand was the only man who knew from his Russian correspondents and Caulaincourt on the one side, and Dalberg and Metternich on the other, how matters actually stood at St. Petersburg and Vienna. While Cambacérès, Murat, and Fouché were in favour of a Grand Duchess, and Lebrun of a Saxon princess, Talleyrand advocated the Austrian marriage as guaranteeing an element of stability not offered by the shifting ambitious policy of the northern Courts, and alone giving France that security on the Continent which would leave her free to put forth all her power at sea against England. A matrimonial connection with Austria would also be

equivalent to acquitting France of the crime of 1793, which was the work of a faction: "The consort of an Archduchess would take rank with the Bourbons." In earlier days the Austrian marriage would have sanctioned a favourite principle of Talleyrand's policy; at the time when it did take place he considered it no longer a guarantee of the future, but simply "a concession by Austria to the necessities of the moment." Metternich's view is couched in almost identical terms: "The Emperor Francis and I hoped by this marriage to secure the monarchy a few years of peace to be used in consolidating her resources."

The *raison d'état*, which in 1792 turned a deaf ear to the despairing appeal of the daughter of Maria Theresa, was, as Talleyrand well knew, perfectly ready to disregard the ties of blood a second time, if the welfare of the monarchy demanded it. For the nonce her statesmen were pleased to forget that the son-in-law of the Emperor Francis was under excommunication by the Church, and that Pius VII. was his prisoner at the moment when the bells of Notre Dame were ringing the wedding-peal for an Austrian Archduchess. "The health of the King of Rome," Metternich cried to the Parisians, and emptied his glass to the future heir before the festive day had approached its end. The Hofburg behaved no better than the Tuileries, and followed the *dictum* of Pascal: "N'ayant pu fortifier la justice, ils ont justifié la force."

In his Memoirs Talleyrand devotes a chapter of more than a hundred pages to this conflict with Rome, which threatened to upset the peaceful settlement of 1801. The business-like grasp of the subject points to the co-operation of an expert. In the dispute itself he took no part whatever, yet he was anxious at all events to supply an appendix to the controversy by defining his own point of view. In spite of all the praise lavished on the mild and pious character of Pius VII., Talleyrand was of the same opinion in 1811 as he had been in 1801, that with skill and firmness all the desired concessions might have been obtained from Rome. The exiled, imprisoned, and isolated Pope still had one weapon left in his hand: he refused to institute the bishops nominated by the Emperor. The latter threatened to abolish the Concordat and summon a national council for the purpose of transferring the rights of the Pope to the proper metropolitans, in case the Papal institution was not conferred within a period to be fixed by law. Talleyrand was not in favour of summoning a council, because it would have given the bishops the moral fulcrum which they could not have obtained without it. His strategy would have been to appoint the prudent and moderate Duvoisin, Bishop of Nantes, Minister of Public Worship, to ask the bishops separately to maintain the Concordat, and then to modify the article relating to the nomination and institution of bishops with the consent of the Pope,

who actually gave it at Savona, so that the right of institution should pass to the metropolitan whenever a see remained vacant for more than six months. This most important of all concessions had already been made by a Papal Brief, although, as Talleyrand incidentally points out, no hope was held out of a return in the shape of a complete or partial restoration of the temporal power. But Napoleon, irritated by the Pope's silence on the question of the council, and by the limitation of the concession to France, declined to accept it, and so the breach could not be healed.

It seemed to Talleyrand the *ne plus ultra* of unreflecting passionateness on the part of Napoleon, that he succeeded in making his uncle Fesch a pillar of orthodoxy by taking up this attitude. "The Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons," he says, "saw his advantage and met the torrent of Imperial invective with honourable firmness." For Maury, his Royalist opponent of 1789, who now reappeared on the scene as schismatic Archbishop of Paris, Talleyrand has only cutting sarcasm, although it was he who in 1806 persuaded Maury to come over into the Imperial camp.

In the midst of these events there is one solitary letter in Napoleon's correspondence which breaks the long silence observed towards Talleyrand. It is dated from St. Cloud on the 29th of August, and relates to the difference with Fouché. "Prince of Benevento," wrote the Emperor, "I have received your letter, the

contents of which pained me. During your term of office I voluntarily shut my eyes to many things. I regret that you should have thought fit to take a step which revives the memory of what I have endeavoured, and will still endeavour, to forget." Nothing seemed more unlikely than that Napoleon would seek to avail himself of the services of a statesman whose loyalty had long been doubtful, and whose opposition was now unconcealed. But it was so.

Polish affairs had reached the crisis which had been gathering since the campaign of 1809, and which was one of the principal causes of the rupture with Russia. A memorandum of Duroc's to Napoleon, which came into the hands of the Tsar by the disloyalty of a subordinate, apprised him, only a few months after Erfurt, that a restored Poland was absolutely necessary for the preponderance of France in Europe. About the same time Metternich reported to Vienna that Bohemia was to be annexed to Saxony, and Davoust to reign over a kingdom of Poland. Alexander had just then fulfilled his promise to join France against Austria by conducting the peculiar campaign in Galicia in which Russians and Austrians carefully avoided each other. Napoleon himself still looked on Poland as a means, especially as a reserve for troops, and not as an end in itself. The idea of breaking with Russia was far distant. But the nation which supplied twenty thousand gallant soldiers for service in Spain

could not be overlooked when peace was concluded. The duchy of Warsaw was doubled in size and numbers, and made a considerable state, while Russia was put off but not pacified with an accession of population numbering four hundred thousand souls. The dreaded kingdom of Poland began to loom in the future. In Austria there were statesmen who did not look on such an eventuality as a misfortune. Wessenberg thought a restored Poland would be a useful ally against Russia; in August 1809 Metternich prepared a memorandum proposing to let the Poles have a native sovereign if they agreed to oppose Russia. The negotiations between St. Petersburg and Paris for a Russian marriage were pending in October, when Champagny gave assurance that "even the name of the kingdom of Poland and the Poles should disappear from history." Count Montalivet declared in the *corps législatif* on the 13th of December, 1809, that Napoleon had never thought of giving the Poles their independence. Alexander replied with a laconic counter-proposal for a convention, the first article of which should pass sentence of death: "The kingdom of Poland shall never be restored." In February 1810, when an Austrian alliance had taken the place of a Russian, and Dalberg was writing to Metternich that in less than five months France would be at loggerheads, and in less than eighteen at war, with Russia, Napoleon offered to conclude a secret treaty binding himself not to support

any enterprise having the restoration of Poland for its object. Alexander declined, whereupon Napoleon wrote: "I cannot stoop to outbid the partitioning powers, and make myself the permanent instrument of their will."

From this moment the foundations of the edifice constructed at Tilsit began to give way. The year was not out before the duel with England compelled the author of the continental system to annex Holland, the Hanseatic cities, and Oldenburg, of which an uncle of the Tsar was the reigning prince. At the same time the Tsar thwarted Napoleon's commercial policy by the introduction of the new Russian tariff, refused to apply the measures taken against the English flag to neutrals, and in so doing gave English goods access to the Continent *via* Russia. He even went farther. To make sure of Finland he sounded the views of the new Swedish Crown Prince Bernadotte. He tried in vain to get into touch with Austria by proposing to exchange territory on the Danube for Galicia: the Danubian principalities had to be first conquered by Russia; Napoleon, on the other hand, had as early as the summer of 1810 offered Austria Illyria with the sea-coast as an equivalent for Polish territory. At last the Tsar and Czartorysky met again. Just as the latter was on the point of severing the last tie that bound him to Russia, a letter from Alexander revived the dream of his youth, the union of all the Polish provinces into one kingdom. On the

25th of December, 1810, the Tsar declared that he had made up his mind to regenerate Poland and liberate Europe. The concession which he required in return was the consent of the Polish notables to the permanent union of the Polish and the Russian crown.

As far back as 1805 Czartorysky had received a lesson as to the value of Alexander's impulses and the durability of his plans: "Jamais Votre Majesté ne donne sa confiance en entier," he wrote in 1806 to his Imperial friend. He demanded the eventual restoration of the constitution of 1791 and the old frontier, but all his flattery could not conceal the fact that the sympathies of the Poles were on the side of France. Under the cold shower-bath of his reports from Warsaw the enthusiasm of the Tsar fell to the level of preparations for a defensive campaign within his own frontiers. In the hands of France Poland remained a sword with its point levelled at Russia. "Not a single Polish village shall belong to Russia," was Napoleon's answer in August 1811 to the Tsar's demand for Warsaw as an equivalent for Oldenburg. The opening of the war was fixed for the spring of 1812. On the 14th of March Schwarzenberg signed the Franco-Austrian alliance on the pattern of that of 1756. The treaty contained a provision that Austria was to be indemnified by Illyria for a part of Galicia only in case she preferred a request to that effect.

Napoleon now considered the moment had arrived

for employing Talleyrand in carrying out a policy which after many deviations had fallen back into the latter's favourite groove. His intention was to send him to Warsaw, but there is not an atom of proof that he had formed any definite plans in connection with the mission. "The Poles are only instruments of his hatred for Russia," said Alexander to Czartorysky, and the latter knew that regard for his Austrian ally would exclude all idea of revolutionising Galicia. Baron Bignon, the French resident in Warsaw, was instructed to warn the Poles against indulging in visionary hopes. "Before summer comes," was the reply, "the Emperor will give us back Poland." Bignon, harassed on all sides, would have been glad of the presence of his old protector Talleyrand; Maret, who had been Foreign Minister since April 1811, and was a friend of the Poles, expressed himself to the same effect.

Napoleon had made it a condition that the mission should not be divulged for a time. Instead of its being kept secret, he heard that it was known in Vienna, through Talleyrand having sent orders there for the purchase of ducats on his own account. The Emperor interpreted this indiscretion as a deliberate one, cancelled his instructions, and sent De Pradt, Archbishop of Malines, to Warsaw in Bignon's place. De Pradt's unfavourable reports on the internal condition of the country completely confirmed Napoleon in his shifty policy of "putting Poland on horseback,"

as he expressed it, and letting her future destiny depend, not upon the services rendered by her, but upon the general political situation.

Talleyrand had no idea of jeopardising the confidence reposed in him at Vienna and St. Petersburg for the sake of such a questionable piece of duty as this. It is true that Metternich had just declared, in a memorandum addressed to the Emperor Francis, that Russia had violated all the rightful principles of European policy in Poland, and had substituted for them a system of plunder, but the protest remained a platonic one, and at Vienna a temporary guarantee of the possession of Galicia seemed preferable to indefinite compensation in Illyria. Napoleon crossed the Niemen, and hastened to meet his destiny. Talleyrand called the Russian campaign "the beginning of the end," and remained in Paris.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FALL OF NAPOLEON AND THE "KING-MAKER" OF THE FIRST RESTORATION.

1812—1814.

ABOUT midnight on the 18th of December, 1812, Napoleon arrived from Russia at the Tuileries, suddenly and unexpectedly, as he had done three years before from Spain. The remnant of the Grand Army was wrapped in the snowy winding-sheet of the northern plains, while the Malet conspiracy gave an inkling of what might be expected if fortune abandoned the Emperor. His return on this occasion led to no fresh outburst against Talleyrand. At Moscow Napoleon had been disagreeably impressed with the fact that his surroundings considered his military position unduly effaced by his political *rôle*. "They see nothing but the General in me, although I am here in my capacity of Emperor," he said to Daru. But in Paris it was otherwise. Armies had to be raised and military prestige restored before state-craft and diplomacy could resume their functions. In the meanwhile Talleyrand's evening whist-party was not

the only meeting in the capital at which the Emperor's policy was criticised without molestation. Napoleon himself had learnt to submit to opposition. In the beginning of January 1813 he summoned the Foreign Minister Maret, Duke of Bassano, Caulaincourt, who had been his ambassador in St. Petersburg up to 1810, the Grand Chancellor Cambacérès, Talleyrand, the ex-minister Champagny, Duke of Cadore, and the able chiefs of the Foreign Office permanent staff, d'Hauterive and la Besnardière, to a solemn conference in the Tuileries.

At this meeting he explained the situation to them. He wished for peace, he said, but was not afraid of war; his resources were still great, and Austria, Prussia, and Denmark were still perfectly loyal allies. Russia was in need of peace, and he had ordered a levy of three hundred and fifty thousand men. The preliminary question was whether it was advisable to await overtures for peace, or take the initiative in making them, and in the latter case, negotiate direct with Russia or ask Austria to mediate. The Emperor, when he spoke thus, knew of York's capitulation, which had taken place on the 30th of December, but also of the repudiation of the agreement and the censure of York by the Prussian king. On the other hand, he did not know that Metternich had been acting in concert with Hardenberg since the 5th of October, and that the Berlin Government had the most exact

information regarding the negotiations for a peaceful settlement which Count Bubna was conducting in Paris under Metternich's instructions. The object of these negotiations was to recover Austria's freedom of action, her assumption of the part of mediator between the Powers enabling her to throw up her alliance with Napoleon. The latter was no longer in a position to reject the proposals which Metternich made with this end in view. Talleyrand knew this as well as Caulaincourt and Cambacérès, and gave his vote for peace, but all three considered the mediation of the Vienna Cabinet so dangerous that they recommended a direct appeal to Russia, while the Duke of Bassano, who advised the contrary course, supported his argument by a reference to the family feelings and the disinterestedness of the Austrian Court. It was impossible to make a more serious or a more naïve mistake, but unfortunately for Napoleon all hope of a direct understanding with Russia was out of the question. The Emperor Alexander had given up listening to the counsels of the peace party, and lent an ear only to men like Nesselrode, Talleyrand's confidant of 1808, who now maintained, in complete accordance with the latter's views, that a lasting peace could only be achieved by restoring the old balance of power in Europe. Napoleon still insisted on retaining all his conquests, even Spain and Sicily; not a village of the Duchy of Warsaw, which was already occupied

by Russian troops, would he cede, and he would only consent to withdraw his armies from Spain on condition that England, his irreconcilable adversary, evacuated Sicily. In his letter to the Emperor Francis of January 13th, 1813, he held out the prospect of a second Russian campaign, without offering the Vienna Cabinet any equivalent sufficiently advantageous to make it decide in favour of the French alliance at the eleventh hour. The result was "the first step to Austria's desertion," the conclusion of a truce with Russia, and the withdrawal of Schwarzenberg's force from Warsaw to Cracow, which compelled the French to give up the line of the Vistula and fall back on the Oder, and left the Russians free to advance; whereupon Prussia too came to a decision, and by the treaty of Kalisch concluded an alliance with Russia in complete concert with Austria. Next came the news of Sweden's desertion, of Prussia's declaration of war, and of the King's appeal to his people.

It was not till the die had been cast by the rising of Prussia that Prince Schwarzenberg returned to Paris, in April, a few days before Napoleon's departure for the seat of war in Germany. Talleyrand said to him: "Now is the time for the Emperor Napoleon to become King of France." Both statesmen knew that such a consummation was now impossible; it was a programme for the future, a hint given by Talleyrand to Austria. The latter had anticipated it.

At Metternich's secret suggestion the Russians terminated the armistice with the Austrians, which had only just been concluded, whereupon the latter retired into Bohemia, and prepared the way for the armed mediation which was the object and the triumph of Metternich's policy in 1813. Napoleon was right when he wanted to send his best diplomatist to Warsaw in 1812. Bignon has good reason for making De Pradt's want of skill partly responsible for Schwarzenberg's success in remaining inactive in Poland and then getting out of the way of the advancing Russians.

For Napoleon the campaign of 1813 began under the worst diplomatic and political auspices. On the other hand, his antagonists were so fully prepared for defeat in the field, that in April Metternich informed the Emperor Alexander, confidentially, that any victories which Napoleon might gain would have no effect on the attitude of Austria. The moment for testing the value of these assurances came after the battle of Lützen. England had met Austria's mediation for peace on the basis of the surrender of the French colonies with an emphatic refusal. Austria now made the conclusion of peace on the Continent subject to four conditions: the restoration of the Illyrian provinces to Austria: the abandonment by France of the Departments beyond the Rhine: the dismemberment of the Duchy of Warsaw, which was

to be divided among the Eastern Powers, and form compensation for Prussia, who received Danzig. Moderate as these terms were, Napoleon could not bring himself to accept them. He bethought him of the advice to deal direct with Russia, and sent Caulaincourt with the only proposals which, according to Thiers, were sincerely meant, to the Tsar, who had offered an armistice after Bautzen, and accepted the mediation of Austria for himself and his allies. But Caulaincourt's offers were not listened to; the matter rested with Austria. In case the latter's overtures were rejected by Napoleon, she bound herself by the secret treaty of Reichenbach to join Prussia and Russia in forcing France back into her old frontiers. When Caulaincourt arrived very late at the Congress of Prague, no one contemplated the possibility of Austria's neutrality. Wellington's decisive victory at Vittoria on the 21st of June had dispelled the last remaining scruples. Fouché, who passed through Prague on his way to Illyria, told Metternich that it would be a disgrace to him if at this stage the ghost of Napoleon's personal power prevented him from concluding a good peace or making war, adding that he had spoken to the Emperor in the same terms. Caulaincourt took just as little pains to conceal his inmost thoughts. "Will your preparations suffice to bring us to reason?" he said to Metternich. "We will do our best to satisfy you," was the latter's reply.

Austria's ultimatum to Napoleon was made more stringent with the object of procuring its rejection. It was rejected on the 11th of August, a few hours after the expiration of the period allowed for its consideration. A contrary decision, as we know now, would not have saved Napoleon, for Prussia and Russia had been bound by treaty to England since June, and could only act in concert with her. The great struggle ended as it had begun. The Continent was the battlefield, but the nerve of resistance was on the Thames.

When Napoleon returned to his capital on the 8th of November, after the catastrophe of Leipzig, he found public opinion apparently calm. The Empress, he told Roederer, had shown more political sense than all his brothers; Cambacérès deserved great credit, and also Savary, the Minister of Police. "Taillerand" —up to the last he pronounced the name incorrectly— had remained perfectly quiet. There had been no question of intrigues, as with Fouché three years ago, or of the "Bourboniens." Their restoration was well known to be a delusion, as the Allied Powers had made their definite exclusion a principle of action, "écartés sans retour." This last remark referred to overtures for peace which Metternich had sent on the 15th of November from the headquarters of the Allies at Frankfort to Paris by means of St. Aignan, a French diplomatist and prisoner of war. St. Aignan was the bearer of an assurance that there was no idea of

menacing the Napoleonic dynasty in the allied camp. They were agreed to leave France her natural boundaries, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Rhine, and they demanded the independence of Germany, Italy, and Holland, and the re-instatement of the old dynasty in Spain. The representatives of England and Russia, Lord Aberdeen and Nesselrode, who also acted for Prussia at Frankfort in Hardenberg's absence, declared they were ready to stop at the Rhine. Castlereagh wrote to Aberdeen that England was ready to make peace; although the nation after the recent great successes was not peaceably disposed, yet the Cabinet would not allow itself to be led astray by this, and would refrain from interference in French domestic affairs.

The reason of this unexpectedly favourable turn of affairs for Napoleon was that the war-party in Germany, who demanded his dethronement and an invasion of France, the Steins, the Blüchers, and the Gneisenaus, had met with a vehement opponent in Metternich. The national factor in the rising of Germany, which he had thought dangerous from the beginning, he now detested. It was equally far from his intention to join in placing the Poles under Russian sway, or in re-establishing the power of Prussia. On the contrary, he took up the traditions of French policy with regard to the central and small states of Germany, and saved the sovereigns of the

Rhine Confederation by making treaties, which replaced the French by an Austrian protectorate and made the division of Germany into petty kingdoms a principle of Austrian policy. He then urged the conclusion of a speedy peace in Paris. "Up to the last moment it was in Napoleon's power to save himself,' writes Talleyrand in his Memoirs. He does not, however, refer to Frankfort, but to Prague and Châtillon. But at Prague Metternich voted for war, and when the meeting at Châtillon took place the French frontier had been already crossed and the position was entirely altered. At Frankfort, on the other hand, Metternich was really in favour of peace, on a basis which would have satisfied the victorious Consulate at Campo Formio and Lunéville.

About this time Beugnot, the Minister in Westphalia, arrived in Paris after the collapse of this kingdom, and saw Talleyrand, who told him plainly that he considered the Emperor lost. The latter had replied to Metternich's offers evasively with the vague statement that "peace, based on the independence of all nations both by land and sea, had always been the aim of the Imperial policy," and had proposed a congress. When he changed his mind eighteen days afterwards, it was too late. Stein arrived in Frankfort and inspired the Emperor Alexander with warlike resolves. On the 1st of

December appeared the manifesto in which the Allies declared that the contest was not against France, but against the preponderance which the Emperor Napoleon had exercised, to the detriment of Europe and France, beyond the borders of his empire. France herself was to remain flourishing and powerful as before. At the end of November, and not in December, as Talleyrand's Memoirs incorrectly state, Napoleon offered him the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But he declined, remarking to Savary, who he knew had subjected him to police surveillance for months: "It is not every one who would care to bury himself in ruins." Caulaincourt was made Foreign Minister instead. His predecessor Maret fell a victim to the dissatisfaction caused by his incapacity, although the Emperor, who knew perfectly well that he was responsible for his Minister's diplomacy, warmly defended him. Pasquier, for instance, relates that Talleyrand, informed by chance of the impending desertion of the Bavarians, sent a courier with the news to the Imperial headquarters, where Maret had been in vain warned of what was going to happen. "You only did it to injure my Minister," was all the thanks that Napoleon gave Talleyrand for his message. Maret's Memoirs go so far as to make him responsible for the continuance of the war. The terms of peace, he says, which Caulaincourt despatched on the 2nd of December on

behalf of the Emperor, would not have been too late had not an emissary of two high dignitaries of the Empire in the meanwhile sent the allied sovereigns and ministers information concerning the state of public opinion in the country, and the slender resistance which the Emperor would be able to offer in case of an immediate advance by the allied forces. Maret mentions no names, but as Fouché was not in Paris at the time, the accusation rests on Talleyrand, although Bignon says that the Duke of Dalberg was the culprit. But this piece of treachery, even if it did really take place, could not have affected the final result. It was Napoleon's delay in the sphere of diplomacy which led to his fall, and, as regards the military situation, Metternich, from political motives and against Alexander's will, prevented a direct march on Paris by making the main army of the Allies advance through Switzerland into Franche-Comté, instead of crossing the Rhine. By this means he brought Switzerland under his influence, cut off Italy from France, and reserved his final decision with regard to France for a subsequent opportunity.

Maret brings a second and more serious charge against Talleyrand. Spain was lost when Napoleon, in order to release his armies in the Peninsula, acquainted his brother Joseph on the 28th of November with his resolve to send Ferdinand VII.

from Valençay to Madrid on condition that the Spaniards and English remained on the other side of the Pyrenees. On the 4th of December Joseph's confidant, Roederer, had an interview with Talleyrand, who considered the unconditional reinstatement of Ferdinand a necessary preliminary to peace with the hostile Powers, especially England and Austria. Bourrienne's and Bignon's statements, on the other hand, that Talleyrand's advice was to win over the Duke of Wellington by offering him the throne of Spain, appear to be a figment of the imagination.

Madame de Rémusat says that Napoleon and Talleyrand discussed Spanish affairs together about this time. "You consult me as if we were not on bad terms," said the Prince of Benevento to the Emperor in the course of the conversation. "Circumstances, circumstances," rejoined the Emperor; "let us leave the past and the future alone, and come to the present." "Very well," replied Talleyrand, "then you have no choice. You have made a mistake, and you must say so, and, if possible, say it in a noble way. Declare that you owe your elevation to the will of the people and the suffrages of the nations, and that it was never your intention to run counter to them; that your object in making war in Spain was to free the Spanish people from the yoke of a detested Minister, who had taken advantage of the weakness of his sovereign, but that

time and circumstances had convinced you that the failings of the monarch had in no wise impaired the love of the Spaniards for their hereditary dynasty, and that this conviction had determined you to restore the dynasty, in order that it might not be said that you had ever opposed the national will. After issuing this proclamation set King Ferdinand at liberty and withdraw your troops from Spain." Napoleon's reply to this was that he must consider how far Talleyrand's advice accorded with his present political views, and what secret interest he might have in giving such advice. Maret's account of the matter is different. He says that it was Talleyrand who exerted all his art to persuade the Emperor to make Ferdinand's return conditional on the ratification of the treaty by the regency, who refused to ratify, after four precious months, between the 19th of November, the date of Napoleon's first proposals to Ferdinand at Valençay, and the 19th of March, when he left for Spain, had been lost. The Duke of Wellington, he adds, was also of opinion that a speedier decision would have secured peace. The Duke himself, however, had made the conclusion of peace subject to an agreement binding the Spanish Cortes not to treat without England. As for Talleyrand, we have a confidential communication of his made at the time, and addressed to the Duchess of Courland, the recipient of his inmost thoughts,

which refutes Maret's charge in an entirely unintentional and therefore all the more credible manner. "La régence d'Espagne," he writes on the 15th of February, 1814, "a déclaré qu'elle ne pouvait acquiescer à aucune offre de négociation, ni de suspension d'armes, ni d'accommodement quelconque tant que leur roi serait prisonnier, et autrement que de concert avec les alliés. Cette réponse, facile à prévoir, et que j'avais annoncée à l'Empereur, a été une des causes de ses grandes colères du mois dernier." These last words refer to a scene similar to that which took place when Napoleon parted from Talleyrand in January 1809. He summoned him to the Empress' regency council with Joseph, Jérôme, and Cambacérès, but had hardly given him this highest proof of his confidence when, a few days before his departure for the army, he sent for him and told him, in the presence of witnesses as on previous occasions, that he was perfectly well aware what he had to expect from him, that he knew him, and on the first cause of complaint would proceed against him with the utmost severity. At the same time Savary was ordered to watch him strictly. Talleyrand, says Pasquier, wrote at once to the Emperor, and pointed out, in temperate language, the impossibility of his occupying the confidential position of member of the council of regency on such terms. It was the last occasion on which he was destined to behold the

Emperor. The impression of bitterness which this parting left on him is revealed in what he wrote to the Duchess of Courland on the 20th of January: "The bad always remain bad. If the head only has been in fault everything is pardonable; but if the heart has committed the offence, there is no remedy, and consequently no excuse. . . . Burn this letter."

While these events were occurring in Paris, Fouché, in pursuance of Napoleon's orders, had left Illyria, which was now occupied by the Austrians, and arrived at Naples, in order to prevent the impending defection of Murat. The latter considered Napoleon's rule in Italy as lost; he had also long detested and envied the Viceroy Eugene, whom he was now ordered to reinforce, and thought the only way of saving his crown was to throw over France. But the secret influence which egged him on to open treason and to an understanding with Austria, was that of his wife. Napoleon's sister Caroline had her brother's ambition, and possessed personal charms, to which Metternich had not been insensible during his mission to Paris in 1808. She remembered this when she found herself confronted with the alternative of remaining loyal to Napoleon or seeking safety without him. "La Reine," writes Talleyrand, "se chargea d'écrire à Monsieur de Metternich, sur lequel elle avait conservé de l'influence et dont elle avait éprouvé la discrétion." By this means Murat received the

promise of an extension of territory in central Italy. "My part was an easy one to play," Fouché confided, on his return from Naples, to Count Chaptal, who was acting as commissary in Lyons; "I told Metternich that I was endeavouring to alienate Murat from the Emperor, and I told the Emperor that all my efforts were in vain, as Murat was determined to join Austria. I have now come to Lyons to persuade Augereau, the general in command, to desert. I have always hated Napoleon, but have never been able to upset him because I had no army. I am now working, in concert with Metternich, for a regency under Marie Louise." The plan failed because Augereau remained loyal to the Emperor. Talleyrand left Fouché his mania for conspiracies; he himself waited to see what shape events, and especially Napoleon himself, would give to the immediate future.

Since the 2nd of December, on which day Schwarzenberg's forces crossed the frontier, France was experiencing the horrors of invasion. At first it seemed doubtful how the population would behave in presence of this calamity, which had not occurred since 1792. But on one point there was no doubt. The nation, exhausted by two decades of war, wished for peace. People asked themselves what would happen when the country was no longer in a position to supply the Emperor with soldiers, the last levy of 300,000 men ordered by him in January 1814

having fallen back on married men and seminarists. There was not a trace of the enthusiasm of earlier days. With unresisting apathy the French cities opened their gates to the advancing torrent of soldiers, and read the skilful manifesto of Schwarzenberg, which distinguished between France and Napoleon. In the country itself, and at all kinds of places, at Amiens, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Rouen, Douai, the Royalists began to show their heads during January, and to circulate proclamations, of which two had been issued by Louis XVIII. himself as early as 1813. The Duc de Berry went to Jersey; the Comte d'Artois sailed for the Netherlands, where soon afterwards a member of the house of Orange was placed on the throne, and from where the French prince was to travel to Burgundy *viâ* Switzerland. At the same time the Duc d'Angoulême left for Spain, to join the headquarters of the Duke of Wellington. But the Bourbons were so utterly unknown to the younger generation that even in Royalist families complete ignorance prevailed as to their movements, and Imperial prefects, like Barante at Nantes, had no difficulty in maintaining tranquillity in the Department of the West. The tone in the capital differed somewhat from that in the provinces. The *corps législatif*, after years of almost absolute submission, recollected the object of its creation, and displayed great bitterness on hearing of the events of

the last few months, of the negotiations at Frankfort, the failure of which could no longer be kept secret, and of the position of the country, the daily increasing dangers of which could not be concealed. The reporter, who was the mouthpiece of the assembly, Lainé, an advocate from Bordeaux, replied to the communications of Cambacérès, Caulaincourt, and d'Hauterive in moderate terms. The Emperor, ran the report of the commission, was to dispose of the country's power of resistance for the maintenance of security and peace, but should lend an ear to the prayers of the nation's representatives, and restore the people the free use of their political rights. This demonstration, mild as it was, excited all Napoleon's rage. He declared that he could not tolerate such language in the face of the invader, adjourned the assembly, and suppressed Lainé's report. On New Year's Day, 1814, in public audience, he called him "a correspondent of the Bourbons . . . un méchant homme." On the same day Lainé's order of expulsion was delivered to him by the Minister of Police. He returned to his native city, and circumstances made of him, what he had hitherto not been, an adherent of constitutional monarchy, among the restorers of which he took his place.

But the protest of the *corps législatif* was not uttered in vain. It convinced the Emperor more and more of the imperious necessity of leaving no

stone unturned in order to come to terms. On the 5th of January he sent Caulaincourt to resume negotiations with the Allies. "Our task is as difficult as it is hopeless," said this loyal servant of the Empire to his companion Rayneval; "believe me, we may do what we like, the Napoleonic era is on the wane, and that of the Bourbons is in the ascendant." He was bound by his instructions to insist on France's natural boundaries as a *sine qua non*; "the restoration of the old Monarchy must bring with it the old frontier," wrote the Emperor clear-sightedly enough. On the 25th of January he left for the headquarters of the army at Châlons-sur-Marne, ninety miles from Paris. According to all credible testimony, the position of affairs was even now such that France could only be brought to abandon Napoleon by decisive defeat in the field. The Senate, in contrast to the *corps législatif*, remained passive; the Royalist opposition in the Faubourg St. Germain did not go beyond talk. Discontent was more pronounced among the used-up tools of the Napoleonic policy.

The Archbishop of Malines, De Pradt, had been living, since the failure of his mission to Warsaw, in banishment in his diocese, whence the enemy's invasion brought him back to Paris. There he was an almost daily visitor in Talleyrand's house, with Baron Louis and Duke Dalberg. The Duke, after many political vicissitudes, was now on such bad

terms with the Emperor that the latter, at the last New Year's reception in the Tuileries, in his usual way made one of those insulting remarks to the Duchess which sting a woman to the quick. Baron Louis, whose financial abilities had not been sufficiently used by the Emperor, had long joined the liberal opposition. Montrond was not of the party. His free tongue had been the cause of his expulsion, first from Paris and then from France, although the Police Minister Savary seemed to make a point of ignoring all manifestations of opposition and discontent. Even De Pradt remained unmolested, and yet his indignation at the régime which had discarded him prompted him to remark, as early as the close of 1813, that all Napoleon could look for now was a million and a frigate at Brest. Talleyrand himself kept within bounds, not out of consideration for the Emperor, but from the absence of all illusion as to the future. His diplomatic experience, as Pasquier rightly remarks, had taught him distrust of all coalitions; communications were still kept up with the allies of yesterday, the small German courts; Talleyrand corresponded with the Court of Baden, as Napoleon did with the King of Wurtemberg. The Austrian plan of campaign invited reflection; after peace was made Marshal Ney admitted to a Prussian general that in November the Allies might have fixed their halting-places in advance right up to Paris, just as

on a march in time of peace. Talleyrand had no reason to misinterpret the delay, or assume an identity of views and interests on the part of elements of such a heterogeneous nature as Gneisenau and Metternich, Hardenberg and Pozzo di Borgo. In December Pozzo went to London, ostensibly to negotiate with the British Cabinet on financial matters, but in reality to counteract the moderating influence which Metternich exercised over the peace-loving Lord Aberdeen. At the end of January the English Foreign Minister, Lord Castlereagh, arrived at the headquarters of the Allies at Langres, and the Emperor Alexander managed to persuade the Austrians to allow the armies to advance to Troyes. At the same time Caulaincourt, who since the 5th of January had been awaiting the resumption of negotiations in humiliating idleness at the French outposts, was informed of the coming opening of the congress at Châtillon, which took place on the 5th of February. His instructions were to insist on the natural boundaries of France as an indispensable condition of peace for Napoleon. "The Powers," wrote Talleyrand on the 20th of January to the Duchess of Courland, "cannot take too many precautions for their security in the new treaty, if they do not want to begin all over again next year." On the 29th he wrote to the same correspondent: "Uncertainty is the worst of all evils; a man with

a head on his shoulders can extricate himself from all other difficulties." Napoleon's departure for the army took place between the dates of these two letters.

Up to the 8th of February, after the battles of Brienne and La Rothière, his position was so hopeless that he met Caulaincourt's urgent entreaties for saving concessions with the vague and unlimited powers which gave his negotiator *carte blanche* "to make terms and save the capital." The congress, at which Stadion represented Austria, W. von Humboldt Prussia, Rassumoffsky Russia, and Lords Aberdeen and Castlereagh England, offered on behalf of Europe the boundaries of 1790 instead of the natural ones. Caulaincourt knew Napoleon's views. The old boundaries meant the return of the Bourbons, he had written before the opening of the campaign: rather than accept them it would be better for him to conquer or perish in the attempt; if the nation abandoned him he would abdicate of his own free will. On the 8th of February Caulaincourt endeavoured to lessen the tremendous responsibility laid upon him by asking Metternich whether Napoleon's consent would ensure the granting of the armistice which had hitherto been refused.

Metternich put off answering till the 16th of February, when he replied in the affirmative. While the Emperor Alexander, on the 9th of February, had

succeeded in breaking off the negotiations for several days, the campaign had entered on another phase. Napoleon had won a victory and told his representative at Châtillon on the 19th that he would rather see these Bourbons, of whom Caulaincourt was continually warning him, return to France on acceptable conditions than sign such a disgraceful peace. "Ah, si Talleyrand était là, il me tirerait d'affaire," he said to la Besnardierè, who had also been sent to Châtillon. "Napoleon was mistaken," rejoins Talleyrand in his Memoirs; "I should not have been able to save him, but in all probability should have accepted his opponents' terms, and he would have disavowed my signature on the first transitory success in the field." When the Châtillon proposals were made known to the Ministers and the regency in Paris on the 4th of March, and the Emperor counted on a patriotic reaction for their rejection, only one vote, that of the Minister Cessac, was in favour of such a course. Practically this made no change, for up to the end of the last period allowed him, which expired on the 19th of March, Caulaincourt had to go on making hopeless demands at Châtillon. In vain Metternich sent warnings at the beginning of February that the Emperor Francis would regret the fate of his daughter, but would not sacrifice the welfare of the state to her. Napoleon's endeavour to obtain a separate treaty with Austria

was answered by the formation of the quadruple alliance at Chaumont on the 9th of March, binding the parties to continue the war in concert, and after the 27th of February, when Oudinot was defeated at Bar-sur-Aube, the issue of the campaign hung once more in the balance.

Although Paris was very scantily informed of what was going on at the seat of war and the congress, Talleyrand had all the necessary information at his disposal. La Besnardière reported the position of the negotiations at Châtillon. Jaucourt, who was acting as chamberlain to Joseph, received through the unsuspecting adjutant Miot all the news of the Emperor's military operations, and passed it on to Talleyrand, who besides was in daily communication with Bourrienne. On the 26th of February he remarked to the Duchess of Courland that the course of the military operations could only be accounted for by disunion among the Allies. But without any special information his trained observation told him that Metternich's policy, reverting to Thugut's old groove, was directed towards the recovery of Italy and of Austria's influence in the Empire. If an understanding with Napoleon on these points proved impossible, then the regency of Marie Louise for her son was a card which Metternich would like to keep in his hand. On the 18th of March he was still in secret correspondence with Napoleon. On the 2nd

of March Talleyrand referred to the latter's perilous position between two hostile armies: while he attacked the one, the other would march on Paris; a proclamation by a Prussian general to the inhabitants of Flanders was in circulation there, in which the Bourbons were openly mentioned for the first time. "Lord Castlereagh," adds Talleyrand, "has, however, declared that Louis XVIII. would be no obstacle when peace came to be concluded, and that England had contracted no obligation whatever to the house of Bourbon." His information was perfectly correct. On the 13th of February the Emperor Alexander had himself sketched out a programme, which excluded the idea of all encouragement of the French Royalists by the Allies. After their entry into Paris the estates of the realm were to be consulted as to the future form of government, and their decision respected even if it were in favour of Napoleon.

The first step, however, was to overthrow him. Pozzo di Borgo, who had returned from England still burning with Corsican vendetta, hurried the Tsar on to Paris; the Swiss La Harpe, who had been his tutor as a boy, full of the sympathy of a republican for the rights of democracies to control their own destinies, won him over to the idea of a constitutional government for France. At the same time, Talleyrand heard from the Grand Duchess Stefanie of Baden that the Tsar's candidates for

the throne of France were Bernadotte and Eugène Beauharnais.

At Châtillon on the 10th of March the period for the ultimatum had expired, but the negotiations still dragged on, and Napoleon's military position was in great jeopardy after the bloody battles of Craonne and Laon, when an unknown person, coming from Paris, called on Count Stadion. His name was Baron Vitrolles ; he had been an *émigré*, then inspector of an agricultural institution, and was the husband of an illegitimate daughter of the Duchess of Bouillon. He was full of enthusiasm for the Bourbons, in which he indulged all the more unreservedly as he had never even seen any of the princes. All his credentials consisted of a seal with Dalberg's arms, and the names of two sisters written in Dalberg's hand, ladies in Vienna society who had interested him and Stadion. A note to Count Nesselrode, from an unknown friend, written in sympathetic ink, contained the words : "It is time to be more clear. You are walking on crutches. Use your feet and dare to do what you can." In reply to a question of Vitrolles, whether he would not receive anything in writing from Talleyrand, who was personally unknown to him, Dalberg had said : "Vous ne connaissez pas ce singe : il ne risquerait pas de brûler le bout de sa patte, lors même que les marrons seraient pour lui tout seul."

Vitrolles, when interrogated by Stadion as to the object of his mission, stated that he was on his way to the Count d'Artois, who was awaiting the issue of events in the rear of the allied armies, completely unnoticed. He also said that he had come to Châtillon on behalf of influential persons, in order to give information respecting the state of feeling in the capital, where the Emperor was detested, and peace, which could only be secured by the return of the Bourbons, longed for, and where a desire prevailed to know what the intentions of the Allies really were. Dalberg, he added, had warned him of Metternich. Stadion rejoined that nothing could be done without him. He sent the French Royalist on to the Minister at Troyes. Metternich declared, as Stadion had done, that the return of the Bourbons had never even been taken into consideration ; that, with the exception of a few *émigrés*, nobody in France seemed to bestow a thought on them, among other reasons, "à cause du personnel de ces princes," added, according to a note taken by Dalberg, the future Minister of the Emperor Ferdinand. Vitrolles was received by the Tsar on the 17th of March. Alexander described the obstacles in the way of a restoration as "insurmountable." The tendency of the age, the army, the revengeful projects of fanatical partisans—everything was against it. He admitted that he had thought of Bernadotte, of Beauharnais, even of a republic,

but the nation must decide. Vitrolles left the Tsar and headquarters without having seen Pozzo di Borgo ; but, like Pozzo and Stein, he urged Alexander to march on Paris and turn the campaign from a strategical into a political one, adding that the monarchy would come to life again in Paris. The congress was at an end when he was received by Lord Castlereagh. Since January the latter had discussed the chances of the Bourbons in his official correspondence with Wellington and with his colleagues in Downing Street, and had expressed his conviction that Metternich would not be biassed against them by Austrian family considerations. Like the Prince Regent, like Wellington and the Tories generally, Castlereagh was anxious for a restoration, but considered that he would promote it most effectually by leaving it in the hands of France. He did not betray his sympathies in any way, even to Vitrolles. The Bourbons, he said, were so unpopular in England that no Ministry would venture to espouse their cause. Vitrolles continued his journey with the impression that the restoration of the monarchy was for the Allies at the most nothing more than one contingency among many others. At Nancy, where he at last reached the Comte d'Artois, he met with another sobering experience in the discovery that the heir presumptive of this monarchy had not an idea or a programme to offer.

While this episode was passing in Lorraine, news reached Paris on the 16th of March that the victorious English had occupied Bordeaux four days before, and that the Royalists there had proclaimed Louis XVIII. as king in the presence of the Duc d'Angoulême. The whole incident was like a *coup de théâtre*. The mayor, Lynch, who had got it up, met with no support or opposition from the English. Lord Wellington declared that he was bound by his instructions, which prohibited all interference in the internal affairs of France; the Duc d'Angoulême afterwards complained to Barante of Wellington's attitude at the time.

But this did not lessen the effect on the population of Paris. The feeling of tranquil security, which had returned with the victories of February, was succeeded by a reaction, produced by this event and by the recent disastrous news from the seat of war, which, in government circles especially, bordered on panic. Savary, who seemed to have lost all soldierly qualities at the head of the police, told the Prefect of Police, Pasquier, plainly that Napoleon was lost, for he could not prevent the entry of foreign troops into his capital, and this would signify the collapse of his power. Joseph, the Emperor's representative, was the most profoundly discouraged of all. He kept on writing that peace must ensue in any event, even if Napoleon were victorious, and listened to the

assurance that a regency controlled by himself could alone save France, saying that his brother was out of his senses. Meneval had to apprise the Emperor of the intention of the Senate and *Corps Législatif* to force him to conclude peace by means of an address. He replied in the style of Louis XIV., that he would have no intrigues nor parties nor tribunes in the state: he was the tribune, and would know how to punish traitors. Joseph meant well, and only compromised himself through weakness. Talleyrand maintained an attitude of reserve, and weighed his chances. When he heard of the defection of the third town in the kingdom, he wrote to his confidant that if peace were concluded now the Bordeaux incident would lose in importance; and that the Emperor's death would have a similar effect: "in that case we should have the King of Rome and the regency of his mother. The Emperor's brothers are certainly an obstacle, because they might aspire to influence; but this difficulty would be easily got over. They would be compelled to leave France. Please burn this letter." On the 20th of March he writes again: "To-day there was talk of a conspiracy against the Emperor, and generals were mentioned as among the conspirators. If the Emperor lost his life, his death would secure the rights of his son, which at the present moment are as much compromised as his own. . . . As long as he lives all

remains uncertain. . . . L'Empereur mort, la régence satisferait tout le monde, parce qu'on nommerait un conseil qui plairait à toutes les opinions et que l'on prendrait des mesures pour que les frères de l'Empereur n'eussent aucune influence sur les affaires du pays. Brûlez cette lettre." The postscript was addressed to third persons: "My letters are opened; those who read them will discover that I love you, which concerns nobody but you and me. After all, I only send news which is being cried out in the streets. This interruption of a confidential exchange of thoughts is sad for those who wish to renounce the affairs of the world."

At that time Louis XVIII. had already assured the Prince of Benevento of his regard and favour in case the restoration took place. The bearer of the message was the King's confidant in Paris, the same Abbé de Montesquiou who in 1789 had been a colleague of the Abbé de Périgord in the provincial assembly at Châlons. But Talleyrand still continued to give the Empress-Regent correct advice, and warned her repeatedly not to leave Paris if she wished to save the capital and keep out the Bourbons. As regards this contingency, Napoleon wrote to his brother Joseph, on the 7th and 8th of February, that so long as he, the Emperor, lived, Paris would not fall into hostile hands. He was alluding to the possibility of his death; but, he added, if circumstances which

could not be foreseen compelled him to undertake a campaign on the Loire, he would not part from his wife and child; in no event were they to fall into the hand of the enemy. It would be better for his son to be strangled than to grow up in Vienna as an Austrian prince: he had always deplored the fate of Astyanax. He would use plain language; if Talleyrand supported the view that the Empress should remain in Paris in case of an evacuation of the city, that was equivalent to treason. The evil influence of this man, and of all those who wished to lull the nation to sleep, had prevented him, to his own detriment, from summoning the people to arms: "Je vous le répète, méfiez-vous de cet homme," he repeated to his brother. "Je le pratique depuis seize ans; j'ai même eu de la faveur pour lui; mais c'est sûrement le plus grand ennemi de notre maison, à présent que la fortune l'abandonne depuis quelque temps." After Montereau, on the 18th of February, Savary received a despatch from the Emperor in presence of Lavalette, ordering him to expel Talleyrand from Paris, and forbid him all communication with his friends there. "What is the Emperor thinking of?" said Savary in a rage; "is it not enough to have to keep all the Royalists in France in check and now the Faubourg St. Germain is to join them! Talleyrand alone restrains it. I shall not carry out this order, and later the Emperor will thank me for

so doing." Lavalette did not agree with him, and thought that the measure might have been the saving of Napoleon, because it would have left the Royalists without a leader, and the Allies without the information which determined the forward march on Paris. But this information was not given by Talleyrand; fate willed that it should come from Savary. On the 23rd of March, two days after the evacuation of Lyons by Augereau and the engagements at Arcis-sur-Aube, two French couriers fell into the hands of the enemy. The first was the bearer of Berthier's orders to Macdonald to cross the Marne. The second brought a letter from Napoleon to the Empress, in which he reported the victory of Arcis-sur-Aube, and informed her of his decision to march towards the Marne, thus diverting the enemy from Paris and drawing near the ring of fortresses, which was still intact in French hands. In the afternoon the council of war summoned by Schwarzenberg to Pougy decided to advance on Châlons, to effect a junction there with Blücher, and then attack Napoleon, in accordance with the latter's calculations. At this point, on the evening of the same day, some Cossacks captured a third courier, this time from Paris, with confidential despatches from high officials to the Emperor, giving an account of the general despondency and the hopeless state of affairs in the capital. The Duke of Rovigo referred especially to the hostile attitude of influential per-

sonages, which would be a source of the greatest danger if the enemy approached the capital. Alexander and Schwarzenberg perused these reports at Dampierre, on the way to Châlons. On the following morning, the 24th of March, at Sommepuis, the Tsar consulted his generals as to whether they should follow Napoleon or march straight on Paris. When General Toll alone voted for the latter course, and Alexander gladly agreed, Diebitsch interrupted him and said that if they wanted to restore the Bourbons the advice to march on Paris was no doubt the best: "It is not a question of the Bourbons, but of overthrowing Napoleon," rejoined the Tsar. Vitrolles had apparently been wasting his time at Châtillon. Pozzo di Borgo also testifies that "the restoration of the Bourbons was neither prepared nor desired before it actually took place."

At Châlons old Blücher was delighted to hear that the die was cast, and Paris the order of the day. The last authentic information received in the capital was the news of Napoleon's march on Vitry; after that four days elapsed without any definite intelligence being received. The enemy stood between the Emperor, who was retiring towards Lorraine, and his capital, which he had left unfortified for political reasons. The country people around were already taking refuge with their property in Paris. There was no hope of saving Napoleon; a definitive decision

had to be taken without him. In the evening of March 28th Joseph summoned the council of regency to the Tuileries, to decide whether the Empress should leave Paris or stay there. With the exception of Clarke, the Minister of War, all who were there agreed that the presence of the Empress could alone prevent a revolution and save the dynasty. Talleyrand expressed himself most positively to the same effect. The last piece of advice which the Empire received from him was perfectly loyal, but the man who gave it knew that it was tendered in vain; Joseph, who had remained silent up to this point, now read letters from Napoleon enjoining the departure of the Empress and his son. They separated in the frame of mind which is usual at funerals; Mollien, who was present, might have quoted the Emperor's parting words: "Mon cher, si l'ennemi arrive aux portes de Paris, il n'y a plus d'empire." At the head of the staircase Talleyrand, leaning on his crutch, turned to Savary and said slowly: "And so the career which had such a glorious beginning is closed. To fall as an adventurer, after having given his name to the century—what an end! The Emperor would be deserving of pity if he had not merited his fate by surrounding himself with incapables. . . . It is time to consider what is to be done." Talleyrand had considered this point, and the decisive moment of his life had arrived.

For the space of fifteen years Napoleon had exacted from the French nation a tribute of blood to be employed in the creation of a world-wide empire. Now that France sank exhausted under him, he passed on her the verdict: "Cherchez qui vous gouverne, je suis trop grand pour vous." The brilliant anachronism of his rule was a thing of the past, but France remained. She had to be saved, and peace was the price of her deliverance. But who could conclude it? The Empire had been wrecked in its attempt to solve the problem set by the Revolution, and no solution of it was to be found within the four corners of revolutionary tradition. In that month of March Europe presented an extraordinary spectacle. The past rose from the grave, the dead came to life again. The Hapsburg monarchy collected its scattered members; the house of Orange returned to the Hague, and the German dynasties to their ancestral homes. Pius VII. was on his way to Rome; Spain laid her blood-stained trophies at the feet of her legitimate monarch. The personality of the ruler counted for so little in the loyalty of the people, that King Joseph deserved to be styled an enlightened sovereign in comparison with Ferdinand VII. The papal régime was reinstated without guarantees. The German patriots had demanded that renegade princes should be brought to justice, and instead of this they were

received with outbursts of loyal rejoicing by their subjects.

All this proved the existence of something undreamt of in the philosophy of the revolution, something stronger even than genius—the power of tradition, the desire, so natural to the human heart, of saving the most precious possessions of mankind from chance and change by placing them under the protection of an unbroken continuity of right. It was not so much the policy of Cabinets as popular instinct which replaced France within her old boundaries. She could only regain her place among the nations on condition that the Revolution was brought to a close, and the new treaties with Europe signed by a hand which could surrender conquests and discard usurpation without humiliation for itself and for the country. This hand was stretched forth by the Monarchy. Indispensable abroad, at home it had no chance of durable success if it returned as a partisan government of the Royalists and a tool of reaction. The King had to be recalled by those who in 1789 aimed at consolidating the throne by constitutional means, and who had no share in the crimes which overthrew it. All that was wanting was the negotiator who could be the mouthpiece of France. Before the necessity of the moment and the confidence of Europe revealed him, Napoleon's suspicion

had designated Prince Talleyrand as the King-maker of the Restoration.

In the afternoon of March 29th, when the Empress and the King of Rome were leaving the capital, no one knew what decision the Prince of Benevento had arrived at. The Allies heard of it that evening. Two Royalists, Mathieu de Montmorency, and Gain de Montagnac, arrived on a mission from Talleyrand and Dalberg at Dijon, where the Ministers of the Powers and the Emperor Francis were staying. They brought an unsigned letter for Stein, "who has observed the events passing in Europe from the loftiest and most general point of view, and who will know how to prevent the frightful consequences of a wrong choice at such a crisis." Stein, like Pozzo di Borgo, had long been in favour of a recall of the Bourbons. He took the envoys to Hardenberg, Metternich, and Castlereagh. "We are in communication with the capital and with Prince —— on this side," wrote Castlereagh from Dijon. From there Montmorency proceeded that same day to the Comte d'Artois. If Michaud is deserving of credit, Dalberg himself came from Paris to Bondy on the 29th to see Alexander. At all events, people there were also in touch with the Hôtel St. Florentin. On the following morning began the last bloody engagements, which cost eighteen thousand men on both sides. In the night of the 30th-31st of March Paris

capitulated. A few hours before, the members of the regency had followed the Empress to Blois. Only Lebrun and Talleyrand remained behind. The latter had asked Savary and then Pasquier to prevent his departure, by force if necessary. Both refused, but Pasquier mentioned the barrier at which Rémusat was commanding the national guard. Here Talleyrand was turned back because his passport was not in order. Early in the morning of the 31st of March Marshal Marmont, his uniform torn and bloody, his face and hands black with gunpowder, returned in the company of the Russian plenipotentiary Orloff to his hôtel in Paris, which had been filled with a crowd of people the whole night. Shortly afterwards Talleyrand was announced. He came ostensibly to ask whether the road to Blois was still open ; then he lavished praise on the political sagacity and the heroism of the Marshal. It has been frequently asserted that it was this interview, and the hints given in the course of it, which paved the way for the Marshal's defection. Turning to Orloff, Talleyrand asked to be allowed to offer a tribute of his profoundest respect to the Tsar ; Orloff replied that he would transmit this *carte blanche* to his Imperial master. The Tsar's first question to the deputation of the Paris municipality at Bondy was whether Talleyrand was in Paris ; he must, if necessary, be kept there by force, and assured of the regard of

the Powers. It was also at Bondy that the deputies read the proclamation to the Parisians, which had been drafted by Pozzo and signed by Schwarzenberg at Alexander's urgent request. It contained a veiled invitation to abandon the cause of Napoleon, but Pozzo's rider, "to seek a remedy in the return of legitimate authority," Alexander struck out with his own hand.

The Tsar was to make his entry into Paris with the King of Prussia at noon. At seven in the morning, while Talleyrand was having his hair dressed, he received a visit from his friend Nesselrode. They had hardly embraced one another and exchanged their first words of greeting when a messenger from Alexander brought word that the Tsar had been warned that his quarters, the Elysée, had been undermined, whereupon Talleyrand offered to put the Hôtel St. Florentin at his disposal. Alexander arrived there in the course of the afternoon, and his host moved into the entresol, which was to be the scene of French history during the next few days.

The entry of the Allies passed off in a most satisfactory manner; but scattered Royalist demonstrations did not convince Alexander that the Parisians wished him to give them back the monarchy. In the same evening he conferred with King Frederick William of Prussia, Schwarzenberg, Lichtenstein, Pozzo, Nesselrode, Talleyrand, and Dalberg. The Emperor of Russia addressed them, saying that

a choice of three courses lay before them: to conclude peace with Napoleon, or appoint a regency for his son, or recall the Bourbons. Talleyrand does not say, either in his Memoirs or elsewhere, that Bernadotte or the Republic was mentioned. He was the only Frenchman present among these foreigners, and he demanded the restoration of the legitimate monarchy. His assertion that sentiment had nothing to do with this decision found ready credit. He summarised his reasons for it as follows: "The Bourbons are a principle, everything else is an intrigue." Alexander had pledged his word to respect the national will as expressed by the constituted authorities. But how was he to know it? "By a vote of the Senate," replied Talleyrand. "Can you guarantee it?" asked the Tsar. "I will answer for it," said Talleyrand. He then called the clerical Bonapartist De Pradt, and Baron Louis, the secularised acolyte at the mass of July 14th, 1791; both declared that France was Royalist. The Tsar yielded. A proclamation to the Parisians was decided on, in which the Allies formally declined to treat with Napoleon, "or with any member of his family," added Talleyrand. The two Austrians agreed. No Englishman was present at this deliberation, by which Europe ratified the political testament of Pitt. An hour afterwards the Royalist printer Michaud brought the first hundred proofs of the proclamation, the contents of which

Talleyrand had settled with Nesselrode in his conversation with him that morning. In it the allied sovereigns promised all the more favourable terms as the return of a wise government enabled France to offer better pledges of tranquillity. Her integrity, as it had existed under the legitimate monarchy, was to be respected, her future constitution to be recognised and guaranteed. The Senate was invited to frame it, and appoint a provisional government.

Talleyrand's account with the Empire was settled when Caulaincourt made his appearance in the Hôtel St. Florentin to treat with Alexander for his master. Napoleon's master-stroke, said Talleyrand afterwards, was the recall of the Bourbons. When Napoleon heard that what he had always feared had happened, he said to those around him : " Talleyrand was a good servant to me ; I ill-treated him, without making him harmless, which was a great mistake. Now he has taken his revenge on me, as the Bourbons will avenge me on him by throwing him over in six months." He was only wrong as regards the period of time. The charge of treachery he left to be made by others : Talleyrand met it with the rejoinder : " Je n'ai conspiré dans ma vie qu'aux époques où j'avais la majorité de la France pour complice, et où je cherchais avec elle le salut de la patrie."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TALLEYRAND A MINISTER OF LOUIS XVIII.

1814—1815.

ON the 31st of March Talleyrand had pledged himself to obtain the condemnation of the Empire from the Imperial Senate. By the 2nd of April the verdict had been delivered. The tactics which were then successful were inspired by a minute knowledge of the men composing it, whom revolutionary dogma and imperial despotism had trained and maintained in a state of submissiveness. Of the one hundred and forty members of the Senate about eighty were in Paris. Talleyrand undertook to see many of them separately; others he won over by means of friends. The regicides and old Jacobins were reminded that the best means of burying their guilt in oblivion was to recall Louis XVIII. to the throne of his fathers; at the same time it was pointed out to them that they could stem the rising tide of retaliation by constitutional guarantees; the Empire was irretrievably lost, and Europe had done with Napoleon. It was time to think of France and of one's own self-preservation.

Since the evening of March 31st all the important journals of Paris had been in Royalist hands. Bourrienne, the companion of Napoleon's youth and his hostile subordinate, gave the signal for defection; he was followed by Chabrol, the Prefect of the Seine, and Pasquier, the chief of the Paris police, and then by the whole municipality, who abandoned "the usurper" to revert to their "legitimate sovereign." In the afternoon of April 1st the Senate met in extraordinary session under the presidency of Talleyrand, and appointed a provisional government. The Prince of Benevento was at the head of it, and his colleagues were Duke Dalberg, Count Jaucourt, ex-member of the Constituent Assembly, General Count Beurnonville, a discontented mediocrity, and the Abbé de Montesquiou as representative of the future and of the King. Like everything else, this list proceeded from the Hôtel St. Florentin, where portfolios were also distributed. Finance fell to Baron Louis, Foreign Affairs to Count Laforest, Napoleon's former ambassador in Berlin, the Interior to his Minister in Westphalia, Beugnot, the Marine to Malouet, the tried friend and adviser of Louis XVI., and War to General Dupont, who signed the capitulation of Baylen. General Dessolles, formerly chief of the staff to Moreau, was made Commandant of the National Guard. Barante says in his Memoirs that next to

the vote of the regicides nothing contributed so much to confirm the Allies in their choice of the Bourbons as the arguments of this constitutionalist with republican views, who did not like the Bourbons and was not liked by them, and who, nevertheless, like Talleyrand, considered them indispensable for France and for Europe. The Senate had performed the first part of its task; there remained the second, the deposition of Napoleon and his descendants. The decree, which was passed without opposition on the 2nd of April, was preceded by a recital that the Emperor had broken his oath, had violated public liberties, and thereby forfeited his rights. His accomplices, the Senators, passed more lenient judgment on themselves, and a few days afterwards managed to save their own pecuniary interests from the wreck. The *Corps Législatif*, which also declared that the Emperor had forfeited his throne, behaved in a more dignified manner. With the exception of the army, all the great bodies of the state joined in this sentence. The Empire was overthrown. The real difficulties for the author of the restoration thus inaugurated did not begin until the Royalists appeared on the political scene.

On the 2nd of April, after adventurous journeys hither and thither, Vitrolles re-appeared in Paris and presented himself at the Hôtel St. Florentin to report how impatiently the Comte d'Artois, now called

"Monsieur," was awaiting the moment when he might take charge of the government on behalf of his royal brother. It was pointed out to him politely but coolly that the time had not yet come for this; that the constitution must first be framed, and the danger from Napoleon pass away; the Abbé de Montesquiou, devoted monarchist as he was, admitted as much to Talleyrand. The audacious Royalist volunteer became aware of the gulf which separated his partisan enthusiasm from the carefully considered *mariage de raison* which was being arranged between France and the Bourbons under the conditional patronage of Alexander. At this juncture, on the morning of April 3rd, but with the date of March 30th, appeared Chateaubriand's pamphlet "De Bonaparte et des Bourbons." It was the first unofficial appeal to public opinion, an attack of extreme violence on the fallen Emperor, whom the author had compared with Cyrus in 1800, and now branded as an Attila, accusing him of cowardice, and, among other things, contesting his military genius, while the forgotten Royal family was referred to in the warmest tones of pity, emotion, and enthusiasm. Louis XVIII., says Chateaubriand, praised this pamphlet by remarking that it had been of more value to him than an army of one hundred thousand men. The Prefect of Police, Pasquier, thought otherwise, and began to fear that the extravagance of the insults would

produce a reaction emanating from the military party.

Since the 31st of March, Napoleon, who had in vain endeavoured to come up with the Allies and save Paris, had been in Fontainebleau with sixty thousand men. So far was he from giving up all for lost that he was preparing to attack Schwarzenberg's army, and recover the capital. The plan was by no means a chimerical one. There were demonstrations in favour of the allied sovereigns in Paris, but the small bourgeois, and especially the Parisian workmen, were, like the peasants and the army, for Napoleon. On the 1st of April the National Guard refused to wear the white instead of the tricoloured cockade. Talleyrand could not resist the temptation of playing off a joke on De Pradt by prompting him to go out and wave a white handkerchief on the Boulevards, where he became the object of a very unpleasing demonstration. On the 2nd of April Pasquier was discussing the perils of the situation with Dalberg, and wondering what would happen if the Emperor were once more victorious. Dalberg interrupted him by saying that the contingency was provided for, that there were chouans and Jacobins, determined men, ready if need be to get access to the Emperor in uniforms of the chasseurs of the guard, which were available for this purpose, and make an end of him. He added that a leader had been found

for them. In March Pasquier had warned the Bourbon princes of designs supposed to be entertained against them by Savary, and even now he expressed his indignation so openly that Duke Dalberg broke off the conversation without entering into further particulars. Chance, however, willed that he should be present on the following morning when Pasquier received a message from Fontainebleau, and availed himself of the opportunity to send word there that it would be advisable to have an eye on the Emperor's life. Dalberg thought the advice timely, and approved of its being given.

This episode, which also came to the knowledge of Lavalette at the time, led to the assertion of the adventurer the Marquis de Maubreuil a few weeks later, that he had been commissioned on the 2nd of April, by Talleyrand, acting in concert with the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia and Monsieur, to assassinate Napoleon and his son. When Maubreuil made this confession, he was under examination in respect of his attack on the Queen of Westphalia. The only proofs he could adduce in support of this monstrous charge were that Roux-Laborie, secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in Talleyrand's personal service, had given him the commission, and promised him in return for it the title of duke with other honours and dignities, and 200,000 francs a year. A nod by Talleyrand when passing through

a room of the Hôtel St. Florentin, at that time always full of people, was to be the preconcerted sign of his consent. Maubreuil went on to say that he had only pretended to accept the mission with the view of preventing the crime, and that, instead of carrying it out, he had a fortnight afterwards made use of the passports given him in order to satisfy the greed of his employers by plundering the baggage of the Queen of Westphalia. Dressed up in this way the incident of April 2nd developed into a fable, due to the imagination of a man whose conduct even King Jérôme could not tolerate at his court. Talleyrand always declared that he had never seen Maubreuil. It was only the detail mentioned by the accused of a proposed use of the uniform of the chasseurs of the guard, and the fact that armed support had been really promised in the allied camp, among others by General Sacken, which led Pasquier to discover that Maubreuil must be the bravo alluded to by Dalberg. Sainte-Beuve also is of opinion that the shadow of assassination passed over the deliberations of those days, and states that Baron Louis or De Pradt was overheard to say: "How many millions do you want?" "Ten!" "Ten millions; that is not too much for ridding the world of such a pest." Whatever may have been planned on the 2nd of April, the following day announced a solution which, if it did not make the crime a useless one, at all events postponed the

necessity for it. On the 3rd Schwarzenberg received a letter from Marmont announcing that, in order to prevent civil war, he was prepared to give his adhesion to the decree of the Senate. This was the signal for defection, and the authors of the *coup d'état* now made no secret of the anxiety with which they had awaited it, and of the fear with which Napoleon's power had inspired them.

On the following morning, at Fontainebleau, mutinous marshals, headed by Ney, forced Napoleon to agree to a conditional abdication in favour of his son. On the evening of April 4th, the members of the provisional government and the Ministry were sitting, as usual, in conference in the Hôtel St. Florentin, when Caulaincourt, Ney, and Macdonald were announced as bearers of Napoleon's decision to the Tsar. Alexander received them at midnight. Talleyrand requested his colleagues to remain: "L'Empereur Alexandre a de l'inattendu," he said to Vitrolles, who was also present and waiting for permission to go to Monsieur; whereupon he put a letter which was ready for the Prince back into his pocket. A few minutes afterwards the Tsar came in, and in a speech of some length enumerated all the reasons in favour of accepting a regency: Austria's sympathy for it, the approval of the army, which could only be won over on this condition, the continuance of the government by means of experienced men, who

held all the threads of it in their hands, the guarantees for the peace of Europe obtained by the removal of the Emperor. Talleyrand was the first to reply, and objected that a regency would only mean the re-establishment of Napoleon's rule under another name. His colleagues expressed themselves to the same effect. Alexander returned to the plenipotentiaries and repeated to them what had been said to him. When he came a second time and argued once more in favour of a regency, General Dessolles lost patience. The Tsar had given his word, he exclaimed, that no further negotiation should take place with Napoleon or any member of his family. Even then the Tsar seemed undecided, and was about to postpone his final decision until he had consulted the King of Prussia, when a Russian officer brought the news that what was expected had happened, General Souham, commanding under Marmont at Essonnes, having deceived twelve thousand men of Napoleon's van-guard, and led them into the midst of the Austrians. The Emperor's resistance was overcome, and his reference to the army had lost its point; the officers and the rank and file remained loyal, but the chiefs were deserting the old for the new flag. On the 5th of April the Allies rejected Napoleon's conditional abdication, and at the same time Alexander guaranteed him the possession of the island of Elba, which had been destined for him for some days, although Lord

Castlereagh, Talleyrand, and the provisional government gave an emphatic warning of the danger attending this plan, and the Prussians even at this early stage pronounced in favour of St. Helena.

On the 6th of April the Senate proclaimed Louis XVIII. king, and the deposed sovereign renounced the throne of France for himself and for his heirs at Fontainebleau.

Vitrolles set out for Nancy to join Monsieur. Only a brief interval now remained to agree upon the constitution, by virtue of which France was to entrust her destiny once more to the Bourbons. The high chancellor Lebrun had undertaken to present a complete draft of one to his colleagues. Their astonishment was considerable when at the first conference on the 3rd of April he took a portly volume in a fine red morocco binding out of his pocket, and proposed the adoption of the constitution of 1791, with the remark that he had not been able to think of anything better. Talleyrand was the first to recover his equanimity, and point out that they had to settle the principles of government and adopt a constitution with a double chamber, which system had been rejected in 1791. Some senators present let out what was passing in their minds, and referred to the necessity of securing their allowances. The Prince of Benevento interrupted this undignified interlude with the observation that their future king was a

man of superior intelligence and liberal sympathies, and that it was their duty to submit to him a piece of work which would stand the test of his criticism.

This was the origin, under the preponderating guidance of Talleyrand, of the senatorial constitution, which, framed on the English pattern and resting on the basis of popular sovereignty, called Louis Stanislas Xavier, brother of the late King, as the monarch elected by the free will of the nation, and after him the members of his family in the old order of succession, to the throne of France, as soon as the King had taken the oath to accept and maintain it. It was accompanied with ministerial responsibility, freedom of public worship, and the right of all Frenchmen to hold all offices. A hereditary Senate, to be appointed by the King, and a second Chamber, freely elected, formed with him the legislative power. Constitutional monarchy was decided upon. It remained to be seen what attitude the sovereign would observe towards the compact, which discarded the old monarchy by the grace of God.

The first blow at the new constitution was dealt by the senators themselves, who voted the allowances for themselves and their descendants, and by this act of egotism became completely discredited in public opinion. The next disappointment came from Monsieur, or rather from Vitrolles. A message from the provisional government dated the 7th of April had

reached the Prince on his way to Paris. It was sent with a draft of the constitution, and reported the events of the preceding days. Two points, the selection of Elba for Napoleon, and the question of the cockade, were presented for the Prince's consideration. The Emperor Alexander dwelt on the necessity of sparing the feelings of the army, which after five-and-twenty years of victory would be loath to part from the tricolour. Talleyrand, Dalberg, and Jaucourt said that subsequent modifications of the constitution in a monarchical sense were possible, but begged that the excitement of popular passions should first be taken into account.

Monsieur left the question with regard to Elba unanswered, and stated that he proposed to make his entry in the uniform of the National Guard, but with the white cockade which it had in the meanwhile adopted. There was all the less objection to this as the Government had already managed to introduce it into the army, although by means of a ruse. Marmont's corps was told that Jourdan was wearing it at Rouen, and Jourdan was told the like of Marmont, which may have recalled the circumstance that the consecration of the first constitutional bishops in 1792 was effected in a similar manner. Besides, every day was bringing fresh accessions to the Royalist cause ; almost all Napoleon's marshals and his high chancellor Cambacérès joined it. Filled with the

elation of approaching triumph, Vitrolles appeared once more in the historic entre-sol, on the 11th of April, and vouchsafed the official intimation that Monsieur would make his entry on the following day as the King's deputy. This implied that the King could delegate a power which he himself was not entitled to exercise before taking the oath. During the ten days in which he had been in communication with Talleyrand, nothing enraged Vitrolles so much as the apparently apathetic calm which the latter preserved in the midst of all excitements and difficulties. The Prince could come if he liked, he said even now with no sign of disapproval; he was quite ready to make over the presidency of the provisional government to him. Vitrolles considered this an outrageous humiliation for the Royalists, and declined the proposal with great indignation. After a long discussion it was agreed to receive the Prince in Paris without any preliminary declaration. The Tsar, when he heard of it, did not take matters so coolly. He sent for Vitrolles and stated in grave language that the Comte d'Artois must be made to understand that the past could not be resuscitated, and that the constitution must be accepted if the Bourbons wished to count on the support of Europe.

On the following day, the 12th of April, warm spring weather greeted the entry of the Prince. The

Emperor Alexander had spared him the sight of foreign uniforms, and consigned the allied troops to their barracks; their duties were performed by the National Guard. At the barriers Monsieur was received by the municipal council and the members of the provisional government, with Talleyrand at their head. He had not seen the Prince since the memorable night in June at Marly. He now advanced towards him, and leaning against his horse, slowly and respectfully addressed him in moving terms. "I am too happy, I thank you," stammered the Prince with tears in his eyes. On the following morning Paris read the version given by Beugnot at Talleyrand's request—"Rien n'est changé, il n'y a qu'un Français de plus."

The twelve days during which Talleyrand and the Emperor Alexander had disposed of the destinies of France had come to an end, and the Restoration was confined within bounds which it could not overstep without jeopardising its own existence. But the compromise which calm judgment had imposed upon conflicting passions now felt the influence of a counter-current. Like all reactions, it was strong enough to confirm a personage like the Comte d'Artois in the delusion that it was an expression of the popular will. At the deathbed of a beloved woman he had abjured for good and all the follies of his youth. But the conversion of the man was of no profit to the prince.

As he had been in 1789, so he returned in 1814, winning and amiable, narrow-minded and destitute of ideas, with the same antipathies and prejudices, and the same inability to grasp a situation or form an independent judgment. At Nancy he made no objection when Vitrolles told him that it would be necessary to employ Fouché; in Paris the first condition he imposed was not to be received by Cardinal Maury, and he kept on addressing Talleyrand as "Monsieur d'Autun." Political questions were beyond him; in religious matters he was guided by a narrow piety which, like the idealism of the Emperor Alexander, soared into mysticism. The only difference was that while the Tsar's ideas, moulded by Madame de Krüdener, led to the Holy Alliance, his own, in Prince Polignac's hands, were destined to provoke the Revolution of 1830 against the Prince's royal friend Charles X. At the same time the Comte d'Artois was possessed with the ambition of actively representing the monarchy of his gouty brother. At Nancy, with the temerity of ignorance, he promised to rule France without the conscription and without levying indirect taxes; that is to say, without soldiers and without money. The behaviour of Vitrolles and the extreme party showed that he intended to shake off the leading-strings of the Senate in Paris. The more the Tsar disliked the party, the more determined he became not to let them upset the settlement of

March 31st. He allowed the Prince four-and-twenty hours of satisfaction at the rejoicings of the Parisians, and then declared that the Senate was empowered to fix its conditions, and that the allied sovereigns were committed to the constitution. Fouché had been in Paris for two days. He now proposed to make Monsieur give a binding promise, in return for which the Senate would appoint him to the administrative vice-royalty of the kingdom. On the 14th of April the Senate proceeded to the Tuileries. Talleyrand acted as spokesman, and said that a just distribution of power and civil liberty would be guarantees for the future. The Prince evaded the point, and instead of making the promise agreed upon, confined himself to an assurance that the King would not refuse to recognise the main outlines of the constitution. Circumstances favoured the policy of the intransigent party more and more. Up to the middle of April Paris was like a besieged city, without communication with the outside world. For a whole fortnight Monsieur and his royal brother received no news of each other. After the 10th of April Soult fought the battle of Toulouse, because neither he nor his English opponent had heard anything of the proceedings in Paris and at Fontainebleau. On the 10th of April Metternich arrived in the French capital; the Emperor Francis did not make his entry till the 14th, after the fate of his daughter had been

settled and she was once more in his hands. Metternich bestowed on the Tsar the dubious praise that he was "not so rambling as usual," and considered the proposed form of government to be neither monarchical nor constitutional. The King of Prussia and his advisers refrained from all interference in these matters. The *Corps Législatif* addressed the Comte d'Artois in extravagantly Royalist terms of devotion, but did not say a word about the constitution. The Prince summoned two members of the provisional government into his council, and confirmed the Ministers in their offices, but he made Vitrolles his Secretary of State, and hardened himself in the belief that the nation supported him in his resistance to his liberal tempters. His watch had stopped at 1789, and the language of Alexander sounded like that of Necker; the Tsar's ideas were destined once more not to find a hearing with the King. Talleyrand acted as he generally did in critical moments: he bided his time. He despatched the high-minded Duke de Liancourt, one of the best of the old constitutionalists, to the King at Hartwell, and then concluded the preliminary peace between France and Europe.

German, Spanish, Italian, and Netherlands fortresses were still held by French garrisons. According as they were evacuated the allied troops quitted French soil, and in spite of Stein's protest the civil admini

stration was replaced in the hands of the French authorities in all countries which had belonged to France on the 1st of January, 1792. This meant the loss to Germany of a quarter of Alsace, which, being held by States of the German empire at the outbreak of the revolutionary wars, had formed the first bone of contention between France and the Emperor. In vain did Hardenberg and Stein claim Strasburg and Landau as compensation. Not less fruitless was the Prussian chancellor's demand for the settlement of Prussia's enormous money claim on France, which he had treated as a matter of course, while the Tsar in a fit of mistaken magnanimity decided that the conquered country, which had levied contribution on the whole of Europe for the space of five-and-twenty years, should be spared the payment of all indemnity. The Allies had promised to give better terms to the Bourbons than to Napoleon, and so Talleyrand, with the support of Russia, England, and Austria, managed to secure the papal *enclaves* of Avignon and Venaissin, Savoy, and bits of Belgium and of the old Palatinate. The preliminary treaty concluded on the 23rd of April was all Talleyrand's work, the Comte d'Artois taking no part whatever in it. He devoted all his efforts to minimising the significance of the engagements entered into at home in his correspondence with the king. Talleyrand too said that they were only binding as general principles.

The Abbé de Montesquiou was more straightforward and outspoken, and advised the King to grant of his own free will and power the concessions which it was dangerous to withhold from the coalition of hostile elements composed of republicans, Bonapartists, and the army. The first piece of news which Vitrolles received from Hartwell was deeply disappointing to the ultras. The King announced his readiness to accept the constitution of the Senate. Next came the enthusiastic reception in London, where people put on the white cockade in honour of the lawful sovereign of France, and hailed him as the restorer of the peace of Europe. To England, said the King in his reply to the Prince Regent, he was indebted under Providence for the re-instatement of his house. In his Memoirs Talleyrand recalls the attitude of England at Châtillon, where she put the exclusive administration of maritime law in front of all other conditions, but left the dynastic question to be settled by military events. The gratitude of Louis XVIII. appears to him exaggerated. It was not so, for England was the only government which recognised his legitimate right.

After a journey which developed into a triumphal procession the King arrived at Compiègne, on the 29th of April. Close on sixty years of age, crippled by gout, enormously corpulent, his features pleasing and imposing, his bearing unexceptionable, penetrated with

the greatness of his race to an extent which threw all other claims to sovereignty into the shade, not averse to parliamentary forms of government, at first from motives of opposition and prudence, and afterwards by reason of his experience gained in England, in literature a *bel-esprit*, who avoided ideas and played with forms, in politics an opportunist, who knew how to bend to circumstances, in private life "selfish and false to a degree," according to Wellington, a Voltairian who had mistresses for decorative purposes and favourites for his personal comfort—this was the monarch who issued the first of his decrees as "given in the nineteenth year of his reign." He reckoned from the date of the death of the unfortunate child in the Temple, Louis XVII. He had sternly asked the bearer of the news that he was King of France, whether he had ever ceased to be so, and had declined to receive Talleyrand's envoy, the Duke de Liancourt. On this occasion Paris heard for the first time of Monsieur de Blacas, and that the way to the King lay through his confidant's antechamber.

Talleyrand and afterwards Alexander came to meet him at Compiègne. The former had to wait three hours before he was admitted. "Well, Prince of Benevento," began the monarch, "I am glad to greet you. Much has happened since we parted from one another. You see, we were the cleverest after all. If you had been so, you would say to me now: 'Let us sit down

and have a talk.' Instead of which I say to you: 'Take a seat and talk to me.'" This authentic version of the King's remarks, as taken down by Beugnot, was very far from being the compliment to the house of Périgord which Talleyrand afterwards made it out to be. The ironical greeting was followed by an ironical offer to recognise the Prince of Benevento as a foreign prince. The latter proved equal to the situation, remained respectful but composed, and replied, without losing his temper, that he was a Frenchman. The conversation then turned to politics, and the King would not bind himself in any way. According to Lord Dalling he said: "You wish me to accept a constitution from you, and you don't wish to accept a constitution from me. This is very natural; but in that case, my dear M. Talleyrand, I should be standing and you seated." To the King's question, how he had managed to upset first the Directory and then Bonaparte, Talleyrand is said to have replied that he really could not say, except that he had an unaccountable knack of bringing bad luck to governments which neglected him. All that importunate questioners could get out of him after this first audience was that he was satisfied with the King. Louis XVIII. might endeavour to wipe out eighteen years of French history: a settlement with Europe was inconceivable without Talleyrand.

When the Emperor Alexander heard how things

were going at Compiègne, he first sent Pozzo di Borgo there, and then came himself, on the 1st of May, to defend his policy for the last time from the dangers which threatened it. A few weeks later, in Madame de Staël's salon, he spoke as follows to Lafayette regarding his interview with Louis XVIII.: "What was I to do? I wanted the Bourbons, instead of giving the country a constitution, to receive one from the hands of the nation; I went to Compiègne in the expectation of being able to make the King abandon his nineteen years' reign and other pretensions of the kind; but a deputation from the *Corps Législatif* arrived before me and recognised him unconditionally. In the face of the King and the *Corps Législatif* I was powerless." From this moment Talleyrand's and Alexander's ways parted. The Tsar was confirmed in his doubts as to the durability of the dynasty which he had recalled against his will. Talleyrand assumed the position of mediator, and advised the Senate to compromise, now that the other Chamber and the marshals, who had also come to Compiègne in the meanwhile, had paid unconditional homage to the legitimate King. The Senate had not yet been presented to the King. On the 2nd of May its members assembled in the *château* of St. Ouen, where he had gone that morning. Talleyrand was their spokesman. "Sire," he said, "innumerable disasters have visited the land of your fathers. The

glory of France has taken refuge in the camp, and the army has saved French honour. Twenty years of ruin and misfortune have preceded your restoration to the throne. The contemplation of so many calamities would be enough to daunt the courage of ordinary men; the work of reconstruction will call for uncommon devotion. . . . The more difficult the situation, the more imperative is the need of a strong and universally respected royal authority. This authority, while it appeals to the imagination by means of the prestige of old memories, will also, by borrowing wise political doctrines from the past, be able to satisfy the claims of modern times. A constitutional Charter will reconcile all interests with those of the throne, and strengthen the sovereign's power by the consent of his subjects. You know better than we do, Sire, that institutions of this kind have stood the test of experience in a neighbouring country, and have proved an assistance rather than a hindrance to the law-abiding monarch."

This speech, which steered clear of flattery, marks an epoch in the history of the nineteenth century. From it may be said to date the introduction of parliamentary monarchy on the Continent.

After the official introduction of the Senators Talleyrand presented the Senate's draft of a Royal proclamation, composed under his own personal supervision, by which the monarch was to bind himself

by oath to respect the constitution as soon as it was assented to by the popular assembly and accepted by the people. Louis XVIII. refused to take the oath, and ordered Blacas, La Maisonfort, and Vitrolles—"incapacity and intrigue," as Talleyrand calls them—to prepare a fresh draft. They knew the King's views, completed the draft in the course of the night, and, without consulting Louis XVIII. again, sent it early on the 3rd of May to Paris, where twenty thousand copies were circulated before he made his entry. In this manifesto, known as the declaration of St. Ouen, the condition imposed by Talleyrand, making the final adoption of the constitution dependent on the consent of the people, was omitted. The King did not receive it from the hands of the Senate, he promulgated it of his own sovereign will. At the same time he summoned the Senate and the *Corps Législatif* to meet on the 10th of June, to consider the draft of the liberal constitution, which was to be settled before that date by a committee composed of members of both houses. For the rest, the King confirmed all the guarantees of the Senatorial constitution. The alienation of the national property was expressly recognised as valid in law, the public debt was upheld, and a solemn promise made that no one should be molested on account of his political opinions or his vote.

Paris, which had already pulled down the statue

of the Emperor from the Vendôme column, gave the King a splendid and enthusiastic reception on the 3rd of May. Only Napoleon's Old Guard drew their grenadier-caps angrily over their eyes, when they caught sight of the old man who had come to take his place; and the Duchess of Angoulême, overcome by her recollections, fainted at the threshold of the Tuileries. Seats were placed for the allied sovereigns near the arm-chair of the King, who preceded them to dinner. The Tsar's disappointment vented itself in the first instance on Talleyrand. The Emperor was heard to say that his personal interests made him forget his country and his friends, that the Bourbons were incorrigible, and the Duke of Orléans the only member of the family with liberal ideas; that he had no hopes of the others, but would not leave Paris till the Charter was promulgated. Talleyrand relied on his most faithful ally, time, saying that it would prove the necessity of liberal institutions. On the 13th of May came his official nomination to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Louis XVIII. kept his colleagues, Montesquiou, Beugnot, Louis, Malouet, and Dupont, in their offices, after Talleyrand had opposed Marmont's appointment to the Ministry of War. Ferrand, an ultra whose want of moderation accelerated the fall of the first Restoration, was made a member of the Council. Vitrolles waited in vain for his own nomination to it. Talleyrand took his

revenge for the night of intrigue at St. Ouen by making common cause with Montesquiou and Blacas, the new Minister of the Household, against Vitrolles. The latter remained Secretary of State for a time, but the favourite of the Comte d'Artois never got into the good graces of the sovereign, the monarchy by the grace of God not considering itself under an obligation to anyone.

When Louis XVIII. appointed Beugnot a member of the committee for settling the Charter, he made it a condition that no information should be given to Talleyrand respecting its labours. On Beugnot's objecting that he had twenty-five colleagues, and that the secret could not be kept, the King replied that that was possible, but at all events he was not to betray it. The exclusion of Talleyrand implied that of Alexander. The Minister did not hear of the appointment of the new senators by the King, and was not made acquainted with the text of the Charter, until the evening before its promulgation, whereupon he remarked, paraphrasing the *mot* of a lady in the eighteenth century, that he thought he had had another son in his head. Pozzo complained that in home affairs Talleyrand's influence was *nil*, whereas in his own department he was absolute master. He had been charged with undue haste in settling the preliminaries of peace. So far from this being the case, it turned out that such favourable terms as those of April 23rd could

not have been obtained a month later. Louis XVIII. had declined to confer his highest order on the Tsar and to let him have Caulaincourt again as ambassador, and Alexander was no longer disposed to place the diplomacy of Russia at the service of the Bourbons. It was in vain that Louis XVIII. asked for an extension of territory on the northern frontier instead of compensation at the expense of the allied House of Savoy. In vain also he demanded the restoration of the Mauritius by England. Metternich and Stadion, Hardenberg and Humboldt, Nesselrode and Rassoumoffsky, Castlereagh, his brother Stewart, Aberdeen, and Cathcart negotiated from the 9th to the 30th of May in the Hôtel St. Florentin with Talleyrand on the basis of the frontiers of 1792. Talleyrand managed to get the Chaumont agreement, which left the distribution of the ceded districts to the Allies, inserted in the secret articles of the treaty of peace, and so concealed from the French. France emerged from the great struggle which she had forced upon Europe with an increase of five hundred square miles of territory and a million more inhabitants, with an unbroken army of three hundred thousand men, without payment of any pecuniary indemnity, without even giving up the stolen works of art. The extent of Talleyrand's success was revealed by the profound disappointment of his opponents, above all of Prussia, whose just demands were postponed till the coming congress,

while Austria once more obtained compensation in Italy, and set up allied dynasties in Florence, Parma, and Modena. In the course of these negotiations a regrouping of alliances took place. Austria and England drew nearer to France. The preponderating, almost commanding influence of the Russian Emperor went for nothing.

Alexander spent the last part of his stay in Paris in close relations with the future Opposition, in Madame de Staël's salon, where La Fayette represented the optimism of 1789 with all its surviving illusions, and Benjamin Constant the new constitutional school, of which he was the cleverest exponent. There the two Humboldts and Stein met Gentz, Sismondi, and the newly-arrived Duke of Wellington, for whom Talleyrand conceived a warm regard. There are few men he has referred to in such terms of respect as the Iron Duke, the loyal friend of his declining years. On the other hand, at the departure of the Emperor Alexander, who after all went to London early in June before the promulgation of the Charter, he did not succeed in restoring the old friendly terms. In vain Talleyrand wrote to him, alluding to Tilsit and Erfurt: "Sire, des relations importantes vous livrèrent, il y a longtemps, mes secrets sentiments, . . . vous avez sauvé la France ; ce que vous avez fait, il faudrait le faire encore. . . . En France, le roi a toujours été beaucoup plus que la patrie ; il semble,

pour nous, qu'elle se soit fait homme. Bonaparte eût répandu plus impunément le sang français, s'il n'eût voulu nous asservir à ses sombres manières. Le roi a longtemps étudié notre histoire ; il nous sait. D'ailleurs, les principes libéraux marchent avec l'esprit du siècle, il faut qu'on y arrive, et si Votre Majesté veut se fier à ma parole, je lui promets que nous aurons la monarchie liée à la liberté." The Tsar turned a deaf ear to his advances, although he knew under what trying circumstances the Minister spoke up for the King. In the Tuileries the Duc de Berry was declaiming against the peace which bore his father's signature, and threatening to punish the Allies for their moderation with the three hundred thousand men whom this peace had given back to France. The courtiers of Monsieur were discussing the claims of the ultras in Church and State as if no Charter had ever been promulgated, while the Prince repaid the flattery and servility of Fouché by a confidence bordering on affection, which provoked the mockery of the King, "le roi nichard," as Talleyrand called him. Talleyrand was no sentimentalist; he did not, like Alexander, throw up the game because his fellow-players began by trying to take the cards out of his hands ; but in this crisis he must have felt grateful that the enlightened minority which gathered round Madame de Staël understood and appreciated his efforts, and that she herself extended to him an

indulgent forgiveness after their long estrangement, and deliberately agreed to forget the past.

During the next few months he confined himself to declining all responsibility for measures which, like Beugnot's ordinance respecting the observance of Sunday, Montesquiou's projected censorship, and the military favouritism shown to unknown Royalists, accelerated the fall of the first Restoration. In the Senate he only spoke once, in support of the financial proposals of Baron Louis, whose budget he defended against the attacks of the other Chamber; in tone and substance his speech sounded like an echo of the financial statements of 1789. The creation of new peers by Louis XVIII. drew from him the question whether the principle of exclusion of all regicides did not admit of exception in favour of those who had distinguished themselves by eminent services. The monarch replied that if the matter rested with him alone he would not deprive himself of the services of men like Cambacérès, Fouché, and Sieyès, but no one at his Court would consent to meet them. In spite of this Fouché remained in touch with the Faubourg St. Germain and the Comte d'Artois on the one hand, and with Talleyrand and even Blacas on the other. In these early months of the Restoration it was still uncertain which party would eventually gain the upper hand. Barras, who had completely broken with the Bonapartists, warned the Royalists of their

intrigues, and of the communications which Murat in Naples, Joseph Bonaparte in Switzerland, and the army maintained with Elba. Blacas considered the warning exaggerated, and refused Barras, who was his cousin into the bargain, the audience which he asked of the King. After this Blacas had an interview with Fouché by the King's orders: "Draw a veil over the crimes which have been committed," said Fouché in an address to Louis XVIII.; "place yourself at the head of the good that has been done in the last five-and-twenty years. Avail yourself of the moral worth which resisted the effects of oppression, of the energy which was displayed in disorder, and of the talents which ripened amid the frenzy of revolution. If the King does not rely upon the support of the nation, his authority will vanish. . . ." To Blacas he regretted a vote which lay heavy upon his conscience, but said that if the Royalists intended to attack the great fact of the Revolution itself, they would be crushed by it; it was not a question of individuals but of things. The army would never forgive its glory being treated as a crime to be expiated, the purchasers of the national property would never allow their rights to be called in question. It was not the King but his surroundings that excited apprehension. A crisis of some kind would arise and he would be isolated. Blacas replied that there could be no compromise between truth and error, between the Mon-

archy and the Revolution. The interview took place in Dalberg's room. Fouché said to him on leaving that with an adviser like this the King would lose ten Crowns, one after the other.

From this time Talleyrand took no part in the conflict of factions, which was daily gaining in intensity, and devoted his attention exclusively to the problem which was awaiting him in Vienna. The confidence of Louis XVIII. was an essential condition to his success, and wise policy had to supply the shortcomings of defective sympathy. Talleyrand won over the monarch by draping the tottering monarchy in a mantle the folds of which were ample and imposing enough to cover the weakness of the government and the blunders of the reactionary elements contending around it. This doctrine, the conception and the name of which was his creation, was that of Legitimacy. "Send me the 'Essai analytique sur les lois naturelles de l'ordre social,'" he wrote one day to d'Hauterive. The author of the book was Bonald, and Talleyrand's letter was dated in 1805, six weeks before Austerlitz. In this essay the advocate of the monarchy laments the fate of nations who think themselves free because they have received their laws from the hands of man, and consider their ideal of equality realised when they impose laws on others. Bonald did not convert the disciple of Montesquieu to the doctrine of theocratic patri-

archalism, but he supplied him with matter for thought. Long before genius had exhausted its resources, the outcome of this protracted reflection took definite shape in Talleyrand's mind. Only traditional right, invested once more with the solemn sanction of the people, could heal the breach between 1789 and the present, and monarchy alone could group the irreconcilables of all parties around the re-established throne, now become the symbol of the nation. It was this idea which gave birth to the Restoration. If the latter was to last, it was bound, both at home and abroad, to be a pledge of peace. Louis XVIII. was fully warned: his throne was lost if he lowered himself to the position of a mere party-king of the legitimists. But Legitimacy itself remained the weapon which, wielded by skilful hands, could restore France to her old position in the world and her old place among the Powers. In Talleyrand's career as a statesman this was the great inspiration by which he secured the reluctant support of the King in Paris, discomfited the diplomacy of his opponents at Vienna, and, achieving what seemed a moral impossibility, enabled the conquered and not the conquerors to turn the scale in the councils of Europe.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

1814—1815.

FOR the first time since the Peace of Utrecht a European Congress was about to assemble. It set up the lofty pretension of closing an era of encroachment and conquest by a satisfactory settlement and a lasting peace, but its actual aims fell below this level. "The conquerors," says Gentz, "wished to share the booty wrested from the conquered," and Vienna was the diplomatic arena in which rival claims and counter-claims crossed each other as swords had just done on the field of battle.

This was experienced to the full by the state which had borne all the bitterness of an ignominious defeat and a foreign yoke, and had found in the depths of her misfortune the moral force and self-sacrifice that enabled her to raise herself and liberate Germany.

Prussia accomplished her gigantic task in concert with Russia. Prussian regiments were still liable to enforced service under Napoleon when Freiherr von Stein took, in St. Petersburg, the preliminary

steps which led to the conclusion of the treaty of Kalisch on the 28th of February, 1813. In it the Emperor Alexander, who had re-conquered the Duchy of Warsaw, guaranteed his Prussian ally the possession of Old Prussia and of so much Polish territory as was requisite to establish military and geographical communication between East Prussia and Silesia. At the same time he pledged himself not to lay down his arms until Prussia had recovered the position which she held before the defeats of 1806. Compensation was to be provided for her in North Germany, with the exception of Hanover, which by the treaty of June 15th reverted to the English Guelphs. A few days later, in the treaty of Reichenbach, and by way of provision for the contingency of peace in the autumn of 1813, the Tsar promised to break up the Duchy of Warsaw and distribute it among Russia, Prussia, and Austria in proportion to the losses which the two last-named states had sustained in 1806 and 1809. But in the Teplitz treaties of September 9th this engagement was modified in the sense that a friendly understanding between the three Courts was to decide the fate of the Duchy of Warsaw. Russia, Prussia, and Austria decided on the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, the destruction of the rule of France and the Bonaparte family on its right bank, and, in the first secret article of the treaty, assured

"full and unconditional independence" to the states lying between Austria, Prussia, and the Rhine.

At Breslau and Kalisch Stein's policy won the day. The sovereigns of Germany were confronted with the alternative of rising with Prussia against the oppressor or losing their kingdoms as renegades. In the former case the hegemony of Prussia in the north and the dualism in Germany aimed at by Hardenberg would be replaced by the grander idea of the leadership of Prussia. But when the time came for carrying it into action, no one turned out to be ready for it, neither the King of Prussia, who wished to spare his Saxon neighbour, nor the peoples themselves, who would not give up their dynasties; least of all Austria, who continued to support the independence of the small states as the keystone of its whole policy. By the treaty of Ried with Bavaria, and similar agreements with Wurtemberg, Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt, Metternich confirmed the central states of Germany in the enjoyment of what they had acquired in the past and of the independence which made the creation of a strong centralised constitution impossible. This was also the object of the treaties of Teplitz. Only the re-arrangement of the various German territories was reserved for the Congress; the independent states were to be formed into a federal union. This was the position at the close of 1813. Before there had been any foreign interference

in German affairs Stein's programme was consigned to the waste-paper basket.

He had been joined by patriots and enthusiasts, by secularised princes and victimised states, who under the watchword "Kaiser and Reich" thought only of the revival of their own separated interests. But there were no definite political aims, and no organised party to secure their triumph. From that moment Metternich carried out the traditional policy of France in the rear of her retreating armies more successfully and more thoroughly than she herself could have done. Stein was the best hated man at the German Courts. He himself, in December 1813, was in favour of postponing the negotiations respecting Germany's constitution till after the peace, for fear that the loosely-knit coalition might fall to pieces. Hardenberg reverted to his old plan of German dualism, the weakening of the central states; he had sanguine hopes of obtaining Saxony, Lower Pomerania, the Rhine districts from Mayence to the Dutch frontier, and Poland as far as the Warthe, for Prussia, a result to be achieved in concert with Austria; in two memorandums addressed to Metternich he promised her ample compensation on the Upper Rhine and on her eastern frontier if she would give up her claims to Ansbach-Bayreuth, while Russia was to be aggrandised by the greater part of Warsaw with two or three million inhabitants.

Stein, although profoundly annoyed at the "unexampled tenderness shown to France," counted on Alexander's federal sympathies for support to Hardenberg's plans, and on the identity of interests between the two states as regards Saxony and Poland, and even in his state-paper of May 12th, 1814, proposed that the King of Saxony should be indemnified in Italy at the expense of the outlawed Murat. But he parted from Alexander on the 2nd of June, and returned to Germany without having obtained any binding promise. The Tsar would not show his hand as regarded Poland. Metternich's attitude gave unmistakable indications that he did not intend to abandon the Saxon dynasty or cede Mayence to Prussia, and that he would not allow Prussia to advance south of the Moselle or Russia to penetrate so far into Poland. He left the solution of the Saxon-Polish question and the reconstruction of Prussia to the decision of the Congress, but before the Allies left Paris the *rapprochement* between Talleyrand, Metternich, and Castlereagh pointed to the position which the three Powers meant to take up with regard to the projects of Prussia and Russia. England had already obtained all she wanted at Châtillon: the undisputed mastery of the seas, the Cape, Malta and Ceylon, the restoration of an aggrandised Hanover to the King of England, and the re-erection of a great Netherlands State, including

Belgium, under the hereditary rule of the House of Orange. Austria had been in possession of Upper and Central Italy since April; in the preceding January Bernadotte had forced Denmark to surrender Norway by the peace of Kiel, intending to compensate her by Swedish Pomerania, in contravention of his promise to Hardenberg. The Tsar had his Polish hostage safe in his pocket. His pretensions had risen with his victories, and he considered himself no longer bound by treaties which had been concluded under different conditions. His four weeks' stay under Talleyrand's roof had enlightened the latter as to his future intentions. Alexander wanted to unite Lithuania and the other provinces conquered by Russia with the whole Duchy of Warsaw; he spoke with enthusiasm of a free Poland, took Napoleon's Polish regiments into his service, and sent them back to their own country, where he massed large bodies of troops. Russia's predominance, he once remarked, was rightly feared by Europe; he proposed to set bounds to it by making Poland an independent kingdom connected with Russia only by the union of the two crowns. These peculiar views were shared by the Russians, but in a different sense. When Alexander returned for a short time from London to St. Petersburg in August, he found there was a strong opposition in the country to any separation of the conquered Polish

provinces. The idea of giving them a free constitution provoked violent antagonism, not only in leading Russian circles, but among English Tories. Talleyrand knew that he was repeating the convictions of the English when he told Sir Charles Stuart that these Polish schemes of the Emperor Alexander had furnished the strongest proof of his youthfulness.

The gaps in Alexander's revelations were filled by daily intercourse with Metternich, Stadion, Hardenberg, Humboldt, Castlereagh, Aberdeen, Cathcart, and Stewart. The information thus obtained led the Prince of Benevento to the conclusion that the moment had arrived for discarding Russia in favour of England. Alexander was played out, and his relations with Louis XVIII. under a cloud; the Peace of Paris had secured all the services which he could render to France. From this moment the Prusso-Russian designs on Saxony and Poland became the hostile factor which had to be combated. Identity of interests brought France to the English alliance, and made Talleyrand revert to the favourite idea of his whole political life.

The appointment of the Duke of Wellington as ambassador in Paris took place in August. He was instructed by Lord Castlereagh to find out, among other things, whether France was bound by treaties with other Powers. The Duke had not arrived at his post when the London Cabinet was enlightened

on this point and as to the future programme of France. France, said Talleyrand to Sir Charles Stuart on the 1st and 8th of August, has entered into no engagements with other states, and does not intend to make any. She is prepared to make all concessions to England in North Germany, where Russia, by adding territory to Oldenburg, endeavours to strengthen an influence which is dangerous alike for France and England. The restoration of Poland contemplated by the Russian Emperor in opposition to public opinion in his own country and to Austrian interests threatens the peace of Europe. England and France must unite to maintain it; to this necessity France is prepared to sacrifice her wish to see the King of Saxony on the throne of Poland. It appears equally urgent to restore Naples to the King of Sicily, and the Queen has already invoked the aid of the Bourbon courts against this piece of neglect on the part of the Powers. England and France are of one mind on all these questions. Their functions at the Congress must be those of a mediator, and for that very reason it is expedient to submit their proposals, not direct, but through states of the second rank like Spain or Portugal. "Our interests are identical," the Duc de Berry also declared to the English plenipotentiaries. Hardly two months had elapsed since Lord Castlereagh had signed the secret articles which, in accordance with the agreements at

Chaumont, excluded France from taking part in the distribution of the ceded territory. Talleyrand has pointed out that their contents were communicated to him, but the articles themselves not signed by him. The English Minister did not say a word about them now ; he only expressed his pleasure at Talleyrand's advances. It would be advisable, he wrote to Wellington, if possible to set France at rest on this point, and proceed as if no such exclusion existed.

It is true that after that certain reserves were made. Castlereagh intimated that existing engagements must be kept, also that he must, in accordance with his promise, take part in the preliminary deliberations in Vienna, which were to commence on the 10th of September. But on the way thither he stayed a couple of days in Paris to confer with Talleyrand. The latter did not get all he wanted, but before he parted from the English statesman he knew that the main point was gained, and that France would not be condemned to isolation or even passivity at the Congress,—the very object which the Prussian representatives at Vienna, the Chancellor and William von Humboldt, in their ignorance of the exchange of views that had taken place between Paris and London, were aiming at.

Humboldt submitted his proposals for the procedure at the Congress to "the committee of four."

Questions of territory and special matters were to be dealt with quite separately from those which were of importance for the whole of Europe. The Polish question in particular was reserved for the consideration of the three partitioning Powers, who, however, were ready to welcome England's assistance. The distribution of German territory was left, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace of Paris, to the four Powers, the settlement of the Italian territory in dispute to Austria and the Italian sovereigns, with the exception of Murat, but including the English protectorate. The future German constitution was to be settled by the German states with the neighbouring countries, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Denmark. The constitution of Switzerland, now endangered by civil war, the future of Naples, the removal of Napoleon from Elba, the abolition of the slave trade, the regulation of international river-navigation, the order of precedence of the diplomatists, were reserved for the decision of the Congress. Freiherr von Stein, who came to Vienna in an unofficial capacity as the confidential adviser of Alexander, presented a similar plan in a special memorandum.

In the meanwhile, however, Prussian diplomacy had committed the fatal mistake which led to its discomfiture at the outset. Hardenberg, as much alarmed as Humboldt at Alexander's Polish plans,

endeavoured to prevent the resuscitation of Poland by joining England and Austria, called on the Tsar to moderate his demands, and in a special letter expressed a confident hope that he would confine himself to a partition, but wrote at the same time to Humboldt at Vienna: "Il nous faut la Saxe." The deposed King was to receive the Legations. When this proposal reached Metternich, the Vienna Cabinet had long been in secret communication with the royal family of Saxony. As far back as May England had received the protest by which the Emperor Francis, as "King of the Romans and hereditary chief of the German body," formally maintained his claims not only to the Legations, but also to all the States of the Church. As regards Saxony, Metternich was of opinion that Prussia's concessions in the Polish question should determine the extent of Austria's in the Saxony matter. How little inclination he had to consent to the exclusion of France, demanded by the Prussian and Russian plenipotentiaries, was shown by his opposition to Humboldt's motion, which was modified as follows on the 22nd of September: matters relating to the German constitution were referred to a committee of the German Royal courts, and European questions to the five great Powers, with the assistance of Spain, subject, however, to the proviso that England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia were to settle the distribution of territory, and com-

municate their decisions to the Cabinets of France and Spain, and then to the minor courts.

Things had reached this point when Talleyrand arrived in Vienna, on the 23rd of September, two days before the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia. He was accompanied by Duke Dalberg. Stein remarked that he would put up with him as envoy of France, but as Herr von Dalberg would kick him downstairs; according to Michaud, Talleyrand said he had taken Dalberg with him for the purpose of circulating the secrets which were to be revealed to everybody. Count Alexis de Noailles was the confidant of the Comte d'Artois, the Royalist La Tour du Pin quite insignificant. La Besnardière, who had drafted the instructions which Talleyrand had given himself, was indispensable. These instructions were meant as much for Louis XVIII. as for the situation in Vienna. The King considered himself the natural protector of his cousins, the Albertins and the Carignans; he wished to remove Napoleon from Elba to the Azores, to obtain the restoration of Parma or some other equivalent for the Spanish Bourbons, and, above all, he insisted on the deposition of Murat. The Minister's strategy was founded on his perception of the fact that the apparently isolated position of France at the Congress might be made an element of strength, provided he could succeed in establishing the principle by virtue of which the

Power that asked nothing for itself intervened in the strife of conflicting interests as the champion of the menaced rights of the smaller states, and the exponent of its own theory of the balance of power in Europe.

The Peace of Paris, run Talleyrand's instructions, held out in its 32nd article to all the Powers, whether great or small, who took part in the war, the prospect of sharing in the deliberations of the Congress. The most and the smallest of them are in Germany; the treaty of May 30th conceded their independence, and at the same time declared that they were to be formed into a federal union in the future. They could not without injustice be excluded from the Congress, and the interest of France demands that they should participate in it. The nations of Europe live under the protection of public law, which rests on three fundamental principles. Sovereignty, which in public law corresponds to private property in ordinary law, can never be acquired by conquest, but only by the sovereign's free and unfettered renunciation of his right. It is valid only for those Powers which have expressly recognised it. The first consequence of this is that the Prince-Primate as well as the King of Saxony must be represented at the Congress, even if, as seems probable, the Congress intends to call upon them to make a partial or complete renunciation of their rights. On the other

hand, the states dispossessed in favour of the Confederation of the Rhine are not to be reckoned in the class of sovereigns, because they were merely vassals in the old German Empire.

The Prince of Orange, the King of Sardinia, and the Emperor of Austria, who had (the last-named in Italy) renounced their rights, have been reinstated by the peace of Paris, whereas Prussia can advance no such claim to the countries beyond the Elbe. The like proposition holds good of the sovereigns who reigned in Tuscany and Modena. The title of the King of Sicily to Naples is in abeyance, but the present ruler of Naples has just as little right to be represented at the Congress. The balance of power in Europe demands the division of Italy into seven independent states, the restoration of Naples to its legitimate sovereign, and of the enfranchised Legations to the Pope, as well as the recognition of the claim of the Savoy-Carignan dynasty to an accession of territory. To place Italy under Austrian rule or under exclusively Austrian influence would be paving the way for her independence. The same remark applies to Germany as regards Prussia. For Prussia ambition is a condition of existence ; she has no scruples and is a slave to her interests. She has been promised an increase of population to the extent of ten millions ; if she has her own way, the figure will soon rise to twenty millions. A bulwark against

her aspiring power is only to be found in the maintenance and consolidation of the smaller states; Saxony must not be sacrificed to her, nor must she be allowed to have Mayence and the districts on the left bank of the Moselle.

The restoration of Poland would be in itself an achievement of the highest value, but is only possible on three conditions. The country must be independent and receive a durable constitution, and neither Prussia nor Austria must be compensated for their loss of Polish territory. But none of these conditions is practicable, least of all the bestowal of political freedom, which would be equivalent to the introduction of anarchy. A new war would be preferable to the aggrandisement of Russia by the whole Duchy of Warsaw. Under these circumstances the only solution is to revert to the last partition. The Poles will then, it is true, not become a nation, but remain a people united by the tie of language. This disposes of Prussia's claim to Saxony, which can only be put forward by way of compensation in the case of a restoration of Poland.

Talleyrand's base of operations as established in these instructions implies such an accurate acquaintance with his opponent's plans, that some historians, among them Treitschke, have arrived at the conclusion that there must have been a breach of faith on the part of Metternich, and that Hardenberg's

proposals of January and April 1814 were communicated to him. However this may be, his sagacity soon pieced together what was not expressly revealed to him. He knew the intellectual physiognomy of the leading statesmen of Europe better than Isabey, the painter of the famous picture of the Congress, did their outward lineaments. He was able to parry the Prussian Chancellor's brilliant frivolity, and take advantage of Metternich's superficiality, indolence, and propensity for intrigue. He made his correspondence with Louis XVIII. interesting by applying Kaunitz's remark on an English guest, "C'est prodigieux, tout ce que les Anglais ignorent," to Lord Castlereagh's insular indifference and ignorance of continental affairs. The Spanish ambassador Labrador, who became quite his subordinate; Hans von Gagern, who was now in the service of his sovereign of the House of Orange as envoy of Holland; Nesselrode, who had lost all influence with Alexander, but who with Stakelberg and Rassoumoffsky still represented the official diplomacy of Russia, were all an open book to Talleyrand. Gentz, the secretary of the Congress, soon became his devoted admirer. It was not a small matter that in his house, the former residence of the Minister Kaunitz, the honours were done by the wife of his nephew, the beautiful Countess Edmond de Périgord, whose sister, the Princess of Hohenzollern and Sagan, had momentarily

captivated the fickle affections of Prince Metternich. The attempt to inflict a social boycott on the French ambassador proved a complete failure. One day at dinner he drank, without moving a muscle, some vinegar which had been handed him by mistake for Rhine wine. At the council table he took his revenge no less coolly on those who wanted to assign him the *rôle* of spectator by breaking up their coalition and putting his own in its place.

He had been a week in Vienna when, on the morning of September 30th, he received a written invitation from Metternich to "assist" at a conference of the plenipotentiaries of England, Russia, and Prussia, at the house of the Austrian Minister. The Spanish plenipotentiary Labrador received a similar communication. Talleyrand clearly saw the object of the use of the word "assister." He presented himself with Labrador, who was in complete accord with his views, and whom he introduced to the conference, firmly determined to seize this first opportunity to assert the claims of France in an emphatic manner. When Metternich handed him the protocol containing the resolutions adopted by the four Powers and he found that they were designated as "Allies" in it, he assumed an air of profound astonishment, and opened his diplomatic campaign by saying that he did not know who, since the conclusion of peace, could answer

to this description. The events that had happened or the decisions that had been taken between the 30th of May and the present date were non-existent for him, and his presence was superfluous if there was still such a thing as Allies. It was not for four, or even for six Powers, but for the whole Congress, to appoint committees to consider the various questions reserved for its decision. The expression "Allies," was the rejoinder, had only been used for the sake of brevity. Brevity, retorted Talleyrand, ought not to be attained at the expense of perspicuity. He then proceeded to read the rest of the document. "The protocol," he wrote to Louis XVIII., "was full of metaphysical arguments and referred to treaties with which we are unacquainted. We should plunge into a sea of disputes if we were to enter on a discussion of all these reasons and pretensions." He refused to sign a document which put France and Spain in a minority, and disposed of Hardenberg's objection that after all the Princes von der Leyen and Lichtenstein could not be allowed to decide the fate of Europe, by remarking that there was no fear of such a result. A casual reference to "the man ruling in Naples" drew from Talleyrand, who had ceased to mention Murat by name, the observation that he did not know who was meant by it. On Humboldt's objecting that the Powers had recognised Murat and guaranteed his kingdom, Talleyrand replied with marked emphasis :

"Those who adopted this course had no right to do it, and consequently could not do it."

The conference broke up. Gentz wrote in his diary that he should never forget it, and that all the carefully laid plans had been upset. Talleyrand had surprised his opponents. On the following morning he demanded in an official note that the eight Powers who had signed the treaty of Paris, consequently Spain, Portugal, and Sweden as well as the five great Powers, should form a commission to prepare the labours of the Congress, but that the members of the committees should be chosen by the whole body.

On the same day Talleyrand was received by Alexander. His old familiarity had given place to a solemn earnestness: Czartorysky, Laharpe, and Capodistrias influenced the Emperor more than ever in favour of liberal ideas on behalf of the Poles, the Swiss, and the Greeks. Talleyrand answered in the same tone. In reply to the Tsar's question how matters stood in France, he drew an optimistic sketch of the situation, above all of the progress of political freedom. So little did it correspond to the reality, that at that very moment the English were thinking of recalling the Duke of Wellington, for fear that he might be the victim of an attempt on the part of the dismissed or degraded officers, who were believed to be capable of any desperate act. Alexander then referred to the necessity of settling his own affairs

satisfactorily. The result would depend on His Majesty's magnanimity, was Talleyrand's reply. The Tsar rejoined that he must keep what he had got, and that the great Powers had no objection. Talleyrand asked if he counted France as one of them. Certainly, was the reply, but interests, "les convenances," must decide. "Right comes before interests," said Talleyrand. "The interests of Europe constitute right," replied Alexander; "I would rather go to war than abandon my claims." The ambassador of Louis XVIII. leaned his head against the wainscoting of the wall behind him, and, dropping his arms to his sides, exclaimed in a theatrical tone that he pitied the fate of unfortunate Europe. Then he relapsed into silence. A casual remark about "the traitors to Europe" drew from him the observation to the Tsar that that was a question of circumstances and dates. When the latter also made use of the expression "Allies" and Talleyrand again objected, the Tsar apologised by saying that he only used the word from force of habit. Louis XVIII. received an exact and sarcastic description of this scene, but Talleyrand did not overrate his first successes, for he knew how absolutely necessary moderation was for him. He had a friend, Jaucourt, to support him in the Ministry, but Blacas was the King's adviser. Metternich demanded that the French ambassador should withdraw his note, which would give a

majority to the smaller Powers and consequently to France, with whom they had agreed to act. Labrador, however, had already forwarded it to Madrid. Metternich then resorted to threats, saying that the four Powers would manage their own affairs by themselves ; Talleyrand rejoined that in that case he would not attend the conferences, but would await the opening of the Congress. He then consented to a postponement till the 2nd of November. He was already inspiring the opposition of the smaller states, and on the 8th of October he demanded that the declaration of the Powers should expressly state that "the Congress was opened in accordance with the principles of public law." "That is a matter of course," exclaimed Prince Hardenberg excitedly. "It will be more a matter of course if it is expressly stated," retorted Talleyrand. "What have we got to do with public law?" asked Humboldt. "It accounts for your being here," replied the French ambassador. Just before the sitting Metternich had confidentially informed him that a portion of Saxony at all events would remain intact, that Luxemburg and Mayence would not be made over to Prussia, and that Russia would not receive an inordinate accession of territory. The word "Allies," he added, had been dropped. During the sitting Castlereagh took Prince Talleyrand aside and promised to support the views of France in regard to Naples if he were

less inflexible on the question of principle. The passage relating to public law, however, appeared after all, but in another part of the declaration, referring to the substance of the decisions and not to the form of procedure.

The opening of the Congress proved a mere form, the centre of gravity still reposing in the committee of the eight Powers. Since the 12th of October the representative of England had abandoned the part of mediator and engaged in a controversy with the Emperor Alexander about Poland. He took his stand on the treaties of 1813 and condemned Russia's conduct as a breach of faith calculated to deprive the world of all hope of a satisfactory settlement. Both orally and in writing he told Hardenberg that the King of Saxony had forfeited his rights. England, he said, had no objection to Prussia obtaining the Rhine districts and annexing Saxony, but this should not serve as a pretext for Russia advancing her frontier beyond the Vistula, and creating a hot-bed of anarchy in Poland. The only way of fulfilling a moral duty to the unfortunate country was to restore its political independence and not to make it a tool in the hands of one Power. Stein and Pozzo di Borgo expressed themselves to the same effect, both holding that the creation of a constitutional kingdom of Poland would seriously endanger the peace of Europe. When the Tsar grew angry and asked

how he reconciled this opinion with his liberal views, Stein replied that Poland had no middle class, which is the civilising and wealth-producing element in a nation. Principles must be modified in accordance with the particular circumstances to which they are applied. Hardenberg agreed with Castlereagh, and endeavoured to clear the ground by enquiring of Metternich whether Austria would consent to the cession of Mayence and the whole of Saxony to Prussia, and to the removal of the King of Saxony to the Legations. Metternich was so far from giving up the idea of saving the whole of Saxony that he had tried to enlist the Emperor Alexander in favour of it by making promises with regard to Poland, and he did not answer Hardenberg's note until the 22nd of October, when this attempt had failed. He gave a refusal as regards Mayence, said nothing about the Legations, laid stress on the Austrian Emperor's aversion to a complete annexation of Saxony, but declared that, if circumstances made it inevitable, it might be conceded on condition that Prussia kept to the north of the Lahn and Moselle and supported the policy of Austria. On the following day Talleyrand had a long interview with the Emperor Alexander. In Paris, said the Emperor, Talleyrand had agreed to an independent Poland; Talleyrand replied that he still did so, but that now it was not a question of independence but of fixing the

boundaries of the different shares. "I promised Saxony to Prussia with Austria's consent," rejoined the Tsar; "if the King does not abdicate of his own accord, he will die in Russia, as Stanislas did before him. Treaties and parchments do not bind me: he is a traitor." Talleyrand interrupted that this expression ought never to be applied to a King, and that the Congress would not listen to such an outrage; Prussia could be aggrandised without sacrificing Saxony; at this point he took a plan of compensation out of his pocket, and gave it to the somewhat mollified Tsar. "Tout s'est fait avec une extrême légèreté," he said to Gagern; "on n'est préparé à aucune question, on oublie qu'on n'est plus à Chaumont. Nous ne voulons rien, absolument rien, pas un village, mais nous voulons ce qui est juste. Et si on s'y refuse, je viendrai jusqu'à la retraite, jusqu'à la protestation." He wrote to Madame de Staël as he had formerly done from London to Narbonne and Dumouriez: "Je ne sais ce que nous ferons ici, mais je vous promets un langage noble." In the meanwhile he had asked for and obtained the King's permission to inform Austria and Bavaria that they could count on the military support of France for frustrating the schemes of Russia and Prussia. The representatives of England and the Hanoverian ambassador, Count Münster, were to be apprised of this, in case it would serve to secure

their assistance, or, at all events, their neutrality. Talleyrand proceeded with the greatest care. He left the advocacy of a warlike solution to Blacas. He himself was of opinion that clearly-defined and energetic action was the best means of preventing it. "Our great object," he repeated in Paris and Vienna, "is to save Saxony. That Russia should obtain as little territory as possible is a secondary consideration." At this point things took an unexpected turn. Metternich's note of October 22nd had caused the Prussian diplomatists some uneasiness, but had not convinced them of the hopelessness of an understanding with Austria. They were surrounded by opponents, and no way out of the difficulty presented itself when the King interfered. On the 5th of November he and the Emperor Alexander had one of those confidential conversations which always won over the Tsar by appealing to the emotional side of his nature. Alexander guaranteed the possession of Saxony, and shortly afterwards made over the administration of the country to Prussia, in return for which Prussia withdrew her objections to a kingdom of Poland and the stipulation that Russia's frontier should stop at the Vistula, made by England and Austria. Hardenberg was on the point of resigning. Like him, Humboldt and Stein condemned the policy which separated them from Austria and England. Castlereagh to all appear-

ances was beaten. In reality, the Russian nation had made up its mind that the kingdom of Poland, of which Alexander and Czartorysky were dreaming, should never come into existence. Liverpool went so far as to write to Canning on the 18th of December, that the Russians would rather have a foreign ruler in Warsaw than see the Tsar at the head of an independent Poland.

Talleyrand accused Prussia of treachery, "because she had abandoned the cause of Europe." But to Metternich, who had quarrelled with the Tsar and threatened, at the close of a violent scene, "that Austria also could create a Polish kingdom," he used different language, and said that "Prussia's defection would possibly turn out an advantage." To Alexander he remarked, as if nothing to the contrary had happened, that Saxony must be maintained with one million six hundred thousand inhabitants, that the Emperor might compensate Prussia in Poland, the independence of which was not objected to by France. He declined the Tsar's offers of support in regard to Naples, saying that that was a question of principles.

As a matter of fact, he was deep in plans which excluded all idea of an approach to Russia. He could now take his stand on the ability of France to put four hundred thousand men into the field, and the good state of her finances, thanks to the Finance Minister

Louis. He even felt strong enough to revert to the traditional policy of France, at home through the Press, and in Germany by means of pamphlets and by working on the representatives of the smaller states. "We decline to have Prussia for a neighbour," he said to Gagern. "Prussia is a quarrelsome Power; we do not wish her to be conterminous with Bavaria; the latter must have Mayence, and the Netherlands Luxemburg." La Besnardière dictated the letter in which the Duke of Coburg espoused the cause of his cousin of Saxony. It was only the defection of the Russophil Crown Prince of Wurtemberg that prevented a joint protest of the German sovereigns. The reaction in favour of Saxony was not confined to Germany, it extended also to England. The Prince Regent and the Whigs were both strongly opposed to the annexation of Saxony, the former for dynastic reasons, and the latter because they objected to any strengthening of North Germany. In the same way public opinion in England was against the enlargement of Hanover. "I do not know anything that would discredit the government more than an unsatisfactory arrangement as regards Poland and Germany generally, combined with a considerable accession to Hanover. . . . Hanover is a point of honour for England, but nothing more." The Tories had to take this feeling into account. But they too were in favour of avoiding all conflict or of postponing it

until the dynasties in Germany, France, and Italy were able to cope with the spirit of the Revolution. The dispute with the Tsar left the English statesmen with the impression that "nothing was to be expected either from his generosity or his common sense." They thought him vain, wanting in tact, and obstinate. His *rapprochement* with Prussia increased the danger of war. Next to England France alone was strongly interested in the maintenance of peace, and the French alliance could be secured by consenting to the expulsion of Murat.

As late as the 25th of December Liverpool was of opinion that there was no evidence of a breach of faith on the part of Murat. On the other hand, Talleyrand and Louis XVIII., who were on the lookout for it, considered it proved. At the end of October, Hyde de Neuville, who had been despatched on a special mission to Italy, reported to the Minister Jaucourt that Napoleon intended to land on the coast of Provence or in Italy, and that if Murat was not recognised he would make common cause with him. The French Consul in Leghorn, Mariotti, a *protégé* of Talleyrand, wrote to him on the 15th of November that a rising was impending in Italy, and that King Joachim had received emissaries from Bonaparte. The Consul also referred to the plan of getting possession of Napoleon's person by a *coup de main*, but thought it would be difficult of execution. Talley-

rand wrote to the King on the 7th of December that they must lose no time in getting rid of the man of Elba and Murat. Pozzo was the strongest advocate of Napoleon's arrest, and Talleyrand moderated his zeal with the words: "N'en parlez pas, c'est un homme mort." It was not Russia but Austria that had to give up Murat. But Metternich still delayed, and constantly changed his programme even as regards the affairs of Germany. On the 11th of November he recanted his vague promises of October 22nd; he now referred only to a partition of Saxony. In spite of this he succeeded in obtaining the Zamosc district and Cracow for Austria by means of Hardenberg's good offices with Russia, in return for which he agreed that Poland should receive a constitution. Prussia asked for the line of the Warthe for herself. The Emperor Alexander, who no longer insisted on the union of Lithuania with Poland, demanded Saxony for Prussia and Mayence for the German Confederation. Thorn and Cracow were to be made neutral and free cities, and the King of Saxony to receive compensation on the Rhine. The mutilated Poland, he said by way of consolation to Czartorysky, was only "une pierre d'attente."

The solution of the Polish question having been thus prepared by him, Hardenberg thought he had all the more claim to Austria's support. On the 3rd of December he was imprudent enough to write

Metternich a beseeching note, in which he asked him to rescue Prussia, which up to that moment had obtained no specific compensation, from her present position. Metternich, who read a surrender at discretion between the lines, instead of thanking the Chancellor, charged him with being responsible for the turn things had taken in Poland, offered Prussia compensation in that quarter and on the Rhine, and only a fifth part of Saxony, on the ground that the leading German states were against its annexation, and that the danger of their allying themselves with France must be guarded against. On the 16th of December this note of Metternich's, which was dated the 10th, was in Talleyrand's hands. It put him in the best of spirits, and inspired him with language which Sorel considers borrowed from Montesquieu, and for which Tocqueville promised the author a monument in the halls of the Institute. In his state-paper he throws over Poland and demands the maintenance of Saxony. A king, he says, cannot be judged, because the verdict delivered against him also affects his people. Confiscation has disappeared from the code of civilised nations ; the King of Saxony has to decide himself what he is ready to surrender To Castlereagh Talleyrand said that the moment had now arrived to close the Revolution with the triumph of Legitimacy. England was afraid of a Franco-Russian understanding and an attack on

Belgium in case of war. On the 23rd of December Castlereagh was authorised by his Government to exchange confidential views with Talleyrand on all pending questions. The latter laid stress on the necessity of a convention between France, England, and Austria, for the preservation of the rights of the King of Saxony. A convention, objected Castlereagh, is equivalent to an alliance, which implies the contingency of war, and our instructions are to maintain peace. He confined himself for the moment to moving for the appointment of a commission of the great Powers to settle the territorial distributions. The motion was accepted, but Russia and Prussia demanded the exclusion of France, whereupon Metternich refused to make Hardenberg's last proposals a basis of negotiation, and insisted on Talleyrand as well as a representative of the King of Saxony being made members of the commission, "because the question of Saxony was a European one." Hardenberg took his stand on treaties and declined to admit either. On the 29th of December Talleyrand told Czartorysky that if the refusal was aimed at him personally he would retire. To the English plenipotentiaries he stated that if France was excluded from the commission her representatives would leave Vienna. On the 31st of December Hardenberg forgot himself so far as to say that Prussia would know how to maintain her rights.

The remark was interpreted as meaning that there was a special alliance between Russia and Prussia. On the following day, the 1st of January, Castlereagh received the news of the conclusion of peace between England and the United States, which left his Government full liberty of action. Four-and-twenty hours afterwards he brought the French Ambassador the articles of a secret defensive treaty between England, Austria, and France, drafted by himself, "as a supplement to the peace of Paris." Each of the Powers bound itself to provide one hundred and fifty thousand men in case of aggression; Bavaria, Hanover, the Netherlands, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Sardinia joined subsequently. Military preparations were made with all secrecy. The invitation of the three Powers to the Porte to make a warlike demonstration against Russia transpired. Talleyrand had at this early stage grasped the fact that England's interests in India would henceforth demand an anti-Russian policy. Castlereagh's attitude was determined by his apprehension that Prussia would not be able to resist the temptation of making a sudden dash on Saxony, after having sacrificed the interests of Europe in Poland. This time Talleyrand had every reason to be satisfied with his English and Austrian colleagues, whose policy he used to call "schoolboyish." To Louis XVIII. he wrote, in the full consciousness of victory, that the coalition was broken

up, and a federal system created such as fifty years of successful negotiation could hardly have brought about. The pupil of Choiseul had restored the alliance of the Bourbon courts with Austria, and the Constitutionalist of 1789 had at last achieved an alliance with England; the Minister of Louis XVIII. was to pay for the triumph of his policy with his own political existence.

During the stormy scenes of December the issue had hung in the balance. Then Castlereagh put a conciliatory interpretation on the step which had been taken. England did not want war either for or against Prussia; her representative at the Congress stated to his Government that the treaty of January 3rd was merely a preventive measure, and resumed his exertions on behalf of Prussia's claims. The latter consented to France's admission to the conferences on condition that Saxony was excluded. News from Paris regarding the unsatisfactory condition of the country and the discontent in the army, which reached Metternich through Dalberg and Fouché, and no less alarming reports from Italy, where Murat threatened to defend his rights by force of arms against French intrigues and against the Italian sovereigns who refused to recognise him, bade Austria proceed with the greatest care. The Emperor Alexander, too, since he had lost hope of getting anything more in Poland, had become lukewarm, but

offered Thorn as a compensation for Leipzig, which Metternich's latest scheme of partition had taken from Prussia. Austria, however, now was willing to let her have half Saxony and the Rhine districts; England demanded Torgau for her, and curtailed the shares of Holland and Hanover in her favour; the Tsar advised all parties to come to terms. On the 8th of February Hardenberg laid before the Congress the final draft based upon Metternich's offers, which divided Prussia into two halves, but stipulated for the guarantee of the Powers for her share of Saxony, even in case King Frederick Augustus refused to surrender it. In this way Prussia was reconstructed. Talleyrand had not got all that he wanted. The Prussians kept guard on the Rhine against France, in accordance with Pitt's policy, and the ambassador of Louis XVIII. endeavoured to prevent the cession of Torgau at the eleventh hour; but they did not obtain either Luxemburg or Mayence, and the maintenance of the kingdom of Saxony secured the victory of the principle on behalf of which he had thrown down the gauntlet. According to Stein's calculation he received two, according to Chateaubriand's three, millions from the King of Saxony, and nobody doubted the assertion, although there is no proof of it, and only Gentz, who received a douceur from the Duke of Wellington, among others, methodically noted his own receipt of

twenty-four thousand florins in his diary. But if Talleyrand took money, he was not to be bought. The interests of France were in good hands. The subtle theory which had saved the Saxon dynasty, did not prevent the ambassador of Louis XVIII. from allowing Bernadotte's title in Sweden to go undisputed. "Could the renunciation of Gustavus IV. bind his son?" asked the King on the 15th of January, 1815, in a fit of compassion for the only true friend of his evil days. Sweden, answered the Minister, is indispensable as a bulwark against Russia; Bernadotte did not become heir to the throne by conquest, but by adoption; regrettable as such a mode of procedure is, we should complicate matters as regards Naples if we plunged into difficulties on his account. In the same way Norway was separated against its will from Denmark, because Sweden had to be strengthened. The cession of the Republic of Genoa to Sardinia, and of Venice to Austria, was also against the will of both. By the treaties of Fontainebleau and Paris the Powers had destined the Duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla to the Empress Marie Louise and her son. But as Louis XVIII. was very loath to see the Spanish Bourbon, the son of the Queen of Etruria, ousted, Talleyrand and Labrador succeeded in obtaining Lucca as compensation for the daughter of the Emperor Francis, without any objection on the part of Austria. But the arrangement was upset by an

unforeseen contingency. The Arch-Duchess, who had been first sold to Napoleon for reasons of state, and was afterwards seduced by Count Neipperg, refused to go to Lucca, because it was so near Elba, whereupon the Emperor Alexander intervened in her favour. She received Parma, on condition of renouncing the succession for her son. The heir of the Farnese had to be content with Lucca up to her death.

In Switzerland, on the other hand, it was Talleyrand who paralysed Russian influence by defending, like Alexander, the liberal spirit of the act of mediation and the rights of the new cantons against the reactionary claims of the old cantons, with Berne at their head. At the same time he acted generously in the question of compensations, maintained the precedence of Berne, in opposition to Laharpe's advice, and secured the neutrality of the country, which was almost as valuable for France as for Switzerland itself. In all these arrangements there was no question of consistency. Talleyrand was guided by purely opportunist motives; he displayed, to use the words of his master Gondy, "le génie propre à se faire honneur de la nécessité, qui est une des qualités les plus nécessaires à un ministre." Strict adherence to principle, in cases where it was prejudicial to the welfare of the state, was as completely disregarded by him in 1815 as it always had been.

On the other hand, a disappointment was in store for those who expected to find in Talleyrand's confidential correspondence with Louis XVIII. proof of his having strongly advocated war in Vienna. In a document which was not intended for publicity, the "Rapport fait au Roi pendant son Voyage de Gand à Paris," Talleyrand was able to point out with marked emphasis that he had resisted the current prevailing in France and in the immediate surroundings of the King, and had insisted on the abandonment of Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine as indispensable conditions of peace and of revival of confidence in the King's government.

The news from France would have prescribed such an attitude even if peaceful inclinations had been wanting. The War Minister Dupont was considering whether it would not be advisable to disband a great portion of the mutinous army. The number of deserters rose to one hundred and eighty thousand in two months. The ten thousand officers of the Imperial army, who were put on half pay and sacrificed to the necessities of the budget, were obliged to see twenty millions lavished on the King's *corps d'élite*, the so-called *maison militaire*. The Comte d'Artois no longer thought it worth while to affect an understanding with his royal brother; he took the opportunity of a tour in the South to let it be clearly known that his Government would not

make any concessions to the principles of the Revolution. The principal attack was directed against the purchasers and possessors of the national property. Fanatical priests refused them absolution, while the abolition of their rights was demanded in pamphlets and petitions; Talleyrand wrote warningly to the King that Article IX. of the Charter was not sufficient to protect them, and that guarantees of a more specific nature were required. When the anniversary of January 21st was turned into an anti-revolutionary demonstration by the Royalists, a report of a St. Bartholomew massacre of the patriots spread among the populace. The nation, wrote d'Hauterive to Talleyrand, was divided into two hostile camps. A report to the King on the state of public feeling admitted that an apprehension of proscriptions prevailed. "France has no army," was Metternich's reply to the King of Bavaria, when he took his stand on the French alliance. "The French," said Wessenberg to Dalberg, "are like dogs which bark but do not bite," whereupon Talleyrand requested Soult, the newly appointed Minister of War, to mobilise sixty thousand men, ostensibly to meet the danger threatening from Murat. The order was issued, and a proposal made to entrust the command of the force to the Duke of Wellington, who declined it; but by the end of February barely thirty-five thousand men had responded to the appeal. "If I were so disposed, I

should not have a moment's peace," wrote Louis XVIII. to Talleyrand, "but I sleep as soundly as I did in my young days. . . . Disturbances are in the air, but they do not distress me. The storm will blow over." The King made the ultras in both camps responsible for the existing discontent. Talleyrand received his information concerning the internal situation from Jaucourt, d'Hauterive, and Fouché, who corresponded regularly with Dalberg; "L'oubli a bien besoin d'être prêché," he wrote to Madame de Staël; "rappelez à ceux qui vous entourent ce que dit un auteur allemand; l'oubli est tellement nécessaire que, même en jugeant son étonnante difficulté, on a besoin de l'espérer encore."

The success of his diplomacy at Vienna was the bright side to this gloomy picture. Even the acquisition of the Rhine districts by Prussia did not impair it, for instead of "a compact kingdom in a ring fence," which her statesmen had expected to obtain, the country was divided, and no one foresaw that this very necessity imposed on Prussia of rounding off her territory would determine her future destiny. As regards the other questions awaiting solution, Talleyrand's prospects were not less favourable. The constitution of the German Confederation, in the form which it retained up to 1866, was not promulgated till the 15th of June, 1815. But the German Empire was given up in Vienna, and Austria knew from the

beginning of the Congress that the central states would not surrender their sovereignty, and that nobody was in a position to force them to do so. Talleyrand, whose good offices had been bespoken by Bavaria as well as by Austria, might well be content with a result which drew from Stein's patriotism the complaint that "the German Confederation broke up Germany into twenty small remaining fragments, each hostile to the other, and united by a spider's web." Ranke gives a milder verdict, and styles the German Confederation a necessary stage of development in the progress towards national unity. "I have no fear of the judgment of your fellow-countrymen," wrote Talleyrand to Gagern in 1835. "Let them bear in mind that there is not a single individual in Germany whom I have knowingly injured, but many a crowned head to whom I have been useful to the best of my ability."

Talleyrand's position became still stronger when the Duke of Wellington arrived in Vienna, on the 1st of February, to replace Lord Castlereagh, whose attendance was required in Parliament. Wellington met the views of the French in the Naples question. Murat's continuance there, he wrote to London, increased the agitation in France so much, that if he were removed Napoleon's presence in Elba would cease to be a source of danger. Wellington not only approved of the plan of Louis XVIII. for a military expedition

to Naples, but was also in favour of armed support of it on the part of England. Liverpool replied that the country was "peace-mad" and would never allow it, but that possibly a blockade of the Neapolitan harbours might be effected. He advised Louis XVIII. to be cautious, because the army could not be depended upon. "I do not deny," he added, "that the maintenance of the Bourbons on the throne of France is the corner-stone of my policy." From different motives, but not less decidedly, the Emperor Alexander now pronounced against Murat, principally because he was a warm friend of his opponent Eugène Beauharnais, and the latter communicated Murat's treachery and the offers made to himself in 1814 to the sovereigns at the Congress. Besides, it was Russia's interest to diminish Austria's influence in Italy. Of all the Powers Austria alone hesitated to pass sentence on King Joachim. In November Metternich declined the proposal of a separate committee for Italian affairs. As long as warlike complications threatened on the side of Saxony and Poland he could not risk military action in Italy. But as soon as this danger was past he refused to bind himself to anything definite. Talleyrand complained that business relating to Italy did not get beyond Prince Metternich's bureaus. Murat's clumsiness came to the aid of the French ambassador. In consequence of news from Vienna in the middle of January pointing

to war, the Neapolitan envoy, the Duke of Campo-Chiaro, was instructed in the middle of February to demand formal explanations as to the attitude of the Bourbon Courts, and at the same time, in case they were of an unfavourable nature, to ask Metternich for a free passage for troops through Austrian territory. The ambassador endeavoured to repair his sovereign's blunder by communicating his instructions and simultaneously requesting that they should be considered as undelivered. Instead of this Metternich replied that Austria would consider all movements of troops across her own frontiers as an act of hostility, and would transfer a hundred and fifty thousand men from Poland and Saxony to Italy. Talleyrand, informed of Murat's step by Wellington, himself suggested this answer. But he still considered Metternich's conduct thoroughly unsatisfactory, because he made Austria's direct intervention in Italy dependent on the personal consent of Louis XVIII. to the cession of Parma to Marie Louise. Talleyrand's despatches in February leave no doubt of the fact that he hoped to persuade the Emperor Francis to dismiss Metternich. He then devoted his attention to a last question pending between Russia and France.

In April 1814, at the height of his intimacy with the Tsar, the Duchess of Courland first broached the subject of a marriage between the Duc de Berry and the Grand-Duchess Anna, and since then Nesselrode

and Pozzo di Borgo had been all the more active in promoting it, because the Emperor Alexander appeared to look on it with great favour. But in Vienna Talleyrand regarded it as an obstacle to his future plans. In a letter to Louis XVIII. he enumerated all the reasons which militated against it: the hereditary madness in the Holstein family, the dangerous tendencies of Alexander, his disregard for the wishes of France, and last, not least, the derogatory character of the alliance. Only a Princess of the House of Bourbon—he mentioned Princess Caroline of Naples, on whom the choice actually fell subsequently—would be a proper bride for the Duc de Berry. Talleyrand knew the King's views, and undertook to break off the negotiations, which had been pending for some time. "Et le mariage?" asked the Tsar at the close of a lengthy interview, and remarked that he had just refused the King of Spain his sister's hand, on account of the difference of religion. Talleyrand knew that in the case of a French marriage a subsequent change of faith on the part of the bride had been conceded in principle. But in spite of this he now replied that he feared the considerations which influenced the Catholic King would also be binding on His Most Christian Majesty; at all events, the latter desired to postpone his decision until after the Congress. Alexander recognised in these tactics the policy recommended to himself at Erfurt, and dismissed

the ambassador of Louis XVIII. with frigid politeness. Talleyrand had burnt his ships as regards Russia. The next time he saw the Tsar, Napoleon was marching on Paris. The famous advice of the Faust of diplomacy to a pupil, "Mon ami, surtout pas de zèle," had been disregarded by the master himself on this occasion.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SECOND RESTORATION.

1815.

ON the morning of March 7th, after a conference with the representatives of the five Powers, which had lasted till three o'clock, a despatch marked urgent from the Imperial General-Consulate in Genoa was handed to Prince Metternich. Being overcome with fatigue, he put it by unopened, and it was not till he found that he could not get to sleep that he broke the seal and read the news that Napoleon had left Elba. Half an hour later he was with the Emperor Francis, who sent him on to the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia with the assurance that he was ready to order his army, which was already on the way to Italy, to retrace its steps in the direction of France. The two monarchs used equally firm language. When Metternich returned home at ten o'clock in the morning to receive the representatives of the Powers, who had been hastily apprised of the event, adjutants had already started in all directions, and a renewal of the war was decided on. Talleyrand was the first to arrive. "Savez-vous," he

asked, "où va Napoléon?" "Le rapport n'en dit rien." "Il débarquera sur quelque côte d'Italie et se jettera en Suisse," said Talleyrand. "Il ira droit à Paris," rejoined Metternich. Talleyrand also said to Wellington, who had received the information almost simultaneously from Lord Burghersh in Florence: "Il ira partout où vous voudrez, excepté en France." To Louis XVIII. he wrote less positively: "La direction qu'il a prise, celle du nord, semble indiquer qu'il se porte ou du côté de Gênes, ou vers le midi de la France." But he thought it more probable that Napoleon had selected North Italy. The escape from Elba he considered due to the carelessness of the English, and said that he must be treated "like a bandit," adding that the event, if turned to good account, might have favourable results. He was more preoccupied with Murat than with Napoleon, continued his report to the King on the business of the Congress as if nothing particular had happened, and announced his impending departure for Pressburg. The King of Saxony, now set at liberty by Prussia, had been there since the 1st of March. Talleyrand insisted on obtaining, in conjunction with Wellington and Metternich, the King's consent to the decisions taken regarding him before the Powers declared against Napoleon at Vienna. The news of the latter's landing in the Golfe de Jouan, which had arrived in the meantime, while

it encouraged King Frederick Augustus to fresh resistance, made the representatives of the Powers change their tone ; instead of friends, he encountered judges, who refused his demands with the intimation that he must submit to the decision of the Congress.

Before Talleyrand left Pressburg he had a meeting with an old friend, which recalled never-forgotten memories of the distant past. The Countess de Brionne, under whose protection the young Abbé de Périgord had made his entry into the world, had sought and found a refuge from the storms of the Revolution with the head of the Lorraine branch of her family, and had declined to receive Talleyrand as Minister of Napoleon in 1805. He was now envoy of her lawful sovereign, and she was on the point of death. In his Memoirs Talleyrand interrupts his narrative of state affairs with the words : " Il faut que la politique attende." His old protectress received him with the remark that he knew what her affection for him had been, and he knelt sobbing beside her. His nerve, which had never left him in the most trying crises of his public life, now failed him so completely that he was obliged to go out-of-doors to recover his composure before he bade her a last farewell.

Immediately after his return to Vienna, on the 13th of March, he signed the declaration of the Powers,

drafted by La Besnardière and revised by Gentz and others, which branded Napoleon as an enemy and disturber of the public peace, upheld the treaty of Paris, and guaranteed protection to the King of France, the French nation and such other Governments as might require it. The Emperor Alexander, not satisfied with this solemn public act, instructed General Pozzo to place the whole Russian army at the disposal of Louis XVIII. Talleyrand had his own reasons for accompanying the offer with the remark that he hoped it would not come to this. The text of the treaty of January 3rd had been kept secret, but some inkling of the intentions which presided over its origin had transpired. General Müffling, for instance, who was in command at Aix-la-Chapelle, wrote on the 29th of January to his English comrade, Colonel Hudson Lowe, that there was a talk of an alliance between Austria, France, and Bavaria, but that he could not believe that England had any intention of making common cause with Metternich. When the contents of this letter were communicated to the Prince-Regent, he thought it was put out as a feeler, and that Prussia had discovered the existence of the treaty. But things discussed in Prussian circles could not long remain a secret to the Emperor Alexander's surroundings. For the present, however, he showed no bitterness; on the contrary, all trace of resentment seemed to have left him. In a fit of

enthusiasm he said he would give his last soldier and his last shilling, even his own life, for Louis XVIII., adding that the time for clemency had gone by, and that the interests of Europe must now be protected in the person of the King. At Talleyrand's request he recalled the Poles who had taken service with Napoleon. He then gave his consent to a renewal of the treaty of Chaumont, which took place on the 25th of March, with the object of destroying Napoleon. This time every state in Europe was asked to join. Talleyrand contrived that special application should be made to the most Christian King for his consent, and that he should be asked to specify the strength of his contingent, so that he appeared as a member of the coalition, and the defence of France and of his dynasty was made one of its objects.

These measures rested on the assumption that the King would remain in one of the northern fortresses. Talleyrand sent emphatic warnings from Vienna of the impolicy of crossing the frontier, and Louis XVIII. solemnly declared that he was ready to die for the rights of his people. But the news of the events passing in France was so scanty at the seat of the Congress, that it was not till the 23rd of March that they knew by letters from Napoleon to Marie Louise of his arrival at Lyons and his intention to be in the capital on the 21st. After the landing near Cannes the Duke of Wellington was of opinion that Napoleon

had been misled, and that the King would defeat him. But now he calculated that seven hundred thousand men would be required to achieve this result. This was the position when, on the 29th of March, news was received from Blacas, and consequently from Louis XVIII. himself, reporting his inglorious flight across the frontier, first to Ostend and then to Ghent, and with it the fall of the first Restoration.

On this occasion Talleyrand's reply betrayed his inmost thoughts. First of all he expressed his official regret at the suddenness of the catastrophe, and then he wrote : "J'espère que Votre Majesté aura emporté avec elle toutes les lettres que j'ai eu l'honneur de lui écrire, et qu'elle aura ordonné à M. de Jaucourt de prendre avec lui tout ce qui est relatif au congrès." Instead of this Blacas had taken away the Crown diamonds at the last moment, but had left the most important documents, among them the diplomatic correspondence with Vienna, in the Tuileries.

The Bourbons had again become a possibility of the future, and Napoleon was once more the leading figure on the stage. He knew before leaving Elba that the Powers at the Congress had discussed his removal to St. Helena ; at the end of January an Englishman, who visited the island of Elba and sent a report of his visit to Lord Liverpool, was assured that in that event the Emperor would yield only to force. Want of money was also making itself felt, for Louis XVIII.

was withholding the allowance of two millions fixed by the treaty of Fontainebleau, "because it would only be employed in planning conspiracies." But these were secondary considerations. The real motive was supplied by the news of the feeling in the army, sent to Elba by Joseph, who was living at Prangins on the Lake of Geneva, by Hortense, now Duchess of St. Leu, from Paris, by devoted generals, and finally brought by young Fleury de Chaboulon, who arrived there on the 12th of February with information from the Duke of Bassano. The events of March, the desertion of the troops, and the defection of Ney, confirmed the assumption that the army was still devoted to the cause of Napoleon. He was on the way to Grenoble when the military conspiracy, which had been talked of for months, broke out at Lille. Its organiser was none other than Fouché. He was convinced that the situation, which had been created by the conflict of party passion, could not last, but by no means certain what system would be the best to put in its place. On the 5th of March, almost the same time as the King, he heard of Napoleon's landing when in Paris. He was in close communication with discontented generals, Drouet d'Erlon at Lille, Lefebre-Desnouettes, and the brothers Lallemand, who commanded in the Aisne. Marshal Ney stated in March that he was in the secret. The plan was to march to Paris, to dictate terms to the King,

take him and his family over the frontier in case of refusal, and then offer the Crown to, or, if necessary, force it on, the Duke of Orléans. This did not prevent Fouché from keeping up relations with the Royalists and the King's immediate surroundings the whole time. But Napoleon's reappearance made it advisable to represent the movement as having taken place in his interests, in case his venture succeeded. At any rate it was time to act. General Lallemand happened to be in Paris on the 6th of March. Fouché did not tell him the news about Napoleon, but persuaded him to hurry to Lille and to lead the garrison to Paris on the pretext that it was done by the King's orders. The other generals agreed, and the regiments started, when Marshal Mortier, who had the supreme command in Lille, unexpectedly met the first section of the troops commanded by d'Erlon on the road. The explanations which the general gave seemed so unsatisfactory to Mortier that he put him under arrest, whereupon the other conspirators took to flight and were shortly afterwards arrested. In the meanwhile the Duke of Orléans had been sent with Monsieur to Lyons in a subordinate position on the 7th of March ; no proof of his complicity was ever forthcoming. Fouché, too, never betrayed himself. He continued to see Royalists, even Monsieur himself on one occasion, to whom he said that the catastrophe could not be averted, but that all need not be given

up for lost on that account: "Sauvez le monarque et nous sauverons la monarchie." According to another version he said to the Chancellor Dambray that he wanted to be Napoleon's Minister and then ruin him. He was almost as outspoken afterwards to Meneval. A warrant was nevertheless issued on the 15th of March for his arrest, which he escaped by flight. On the 21st of March Napoleon appointed him Minister of Police. Different reports were circulated about the conspiracy which had failed at Lille. In Paris it was interpreted as an Imperialist rising. The Emperor told Meneval in April that he had not dethroned Louis XVIII., but the Duke of Orléans.

He had quitted Elba with the mistaken idea that the Congress was on the point of breaking up without achieving any result, and was not prepared for the unanimity of the hostile verdict passed on him by Europe. On the journey from Cannes to Paris the magnitude of the enterprise and the wild acclamations of the troops brought on a sort of intoxication. This passed off when old adherents and new allies received him in the Tuileries, and discussed with him the necessity of constitutional forms for the new democratic Empire, which could only come into existence on condition of claiming to represent the popular will. Caught in the toils of constitutionalism, the lion could no longer put forth his old strength. His profound dissatisfaction was revealed

in the remark to Mollien: "Bah! the time for flattery has gone by. They have let me come as they let the other go." Then he resumed the struggle with his destiny, which might yet be averted if the European coalition could be broken up. The diplomatic corps had left Paris on March 20th. Only the Austrian and Russian plenipotentiaries were waiting for their passports and horses; Caulaincourt handed the latter a copy of the treaty of January 3rd to give to the Tsar.

Alexander at first questioned the authenticity of the document. Then he sent for Metternich, showed it to him, and threw it into the fire before his eyes. "Talleyrand is a scoundrel," exclaimed Stein, who was present. "Past disloyalty should be forgotten," said the Emperor, with the sentimentalism peculiar to him. Castlereagh, in anticipation of the unpleasing discovery, wrote to Wellington that the treaty which owed its origin to Hardenberg's menacing attitude would not have any effect on Alexander's views. Talleyrand told Nesselrode that Jaucourt had left nothing of importance in the Tuileries, and as a matter of fact Jaucourt had taken the original document away with him. Observing a sceptical expression in Nesselrode's face, he added in a tone of indifference: "Oh, I know what you are thinking about—that treaty. It was not badly meant. I only wanted to break up the quadruple alliance!"

The inevitable reaction followed in Alexander's case. In a conversation with Lord Clancarty, the successor of Wellington, who had gone to Belgium to take over the command of the forces, he mentioned the Duke of Orléans as the only hope of the liberal party compared with the incapable elder line. In his old tone of 1814 he stipulated that France should have the right of controlling her own destiny, and now said that he would not send a single soldier to fight for the Bourbons if they were to be forced on the French. The Whigs in the English Parliament expressed similar views ; they advocated the maintenance of peace, and their opposition led to a declaration by the Ministry, that the treaty of March 25th committed the Powers to a struggle with Napoleon Bonaparte, but not to a dynastic war waged for the purpose of thrusting a specified form of government on the French nation, although the Prince Regent and his allies warmly desired the restoration of Louis XVIII. But now that Louis XVIII. had not a single soldier left, the Powers were all the less disposed to admit him into their coalition, as the idea was gaining ground of demanding cessions of territory from France at the next peace, in accordance with the text of the last declaration of the Congress, dated May 12th, "to revert to the position of March 31st, 1814," and of revising the treaty of Paris. Talleyrand, however, obtained the important concession that

the Powers sent diplomatic representatives to the King at Ghent.

While this was going on at Vienna, Napoleon did not remain inactive. Attempts at justification and peaceful assurances followed one after the other, through official channels by means of Caulaincourt, and privately through the Beauharnais, Eugène, Hortense, and Stéphanie of Baden, for all of whom the Tsar retained a great regard. He even hoped to mollify the English by the abolition of the slave-trade, which the Government of Louis XVIII. had postponed in 1814 for five years for commercial reasons. "The wolf is turned shepherd," said Talleyrand, mockingly. The Emperor had, by a decree, which was ante-dated the 13th of March from Lyons, because no Minister would sign it, impeached him and a dozen others, among them Dalberg, Marmont, and Vitrolles, and sequestrated their property. The news now reached Paris that the reactionary party in Ghent was making the Liberal tendencies of Talleyrand and his friends responsible for the fall of the throne, and insisting on his dismissal. "Confidence cannot come at command," wrote even Pozzo, who considered him indispensable, after he had seen the King. This intelligence made Napoleon change his tactics.

After General Flahaut and other emissaries had been captured on the road, Talleyrand's friend

Montrond reached Vienna with despatches for him, Metternich, and Nesselrode. All three refused to treat, and sent word to Ghent; but Wellington, informed by Clancarty, wrote from Brussels to London that Montrond had also represented the wishes of the Jacobins and the army, that "the poor King's" chances of regaining his throne were disappearing, and that the Emperor Alexander was full of prejudice against him. The Spanish ambassador Labrador, in reporting these occurrences, mentions a letter of Talleyrand's, dissuading his colleagues from insisting on a formal declaration of the Powers in favour of Louis XVIII. The writer added that he knew the French, who would eventually decide for Louis XVIII. if no pressure were put upon them. Metternich considered such a declaration by no means necessary. At the suggestion of Montrond he wrote secretly to Fouché that he was sending Freiherr von Ottenfels, under the name of Werner, to Bâle, to receive information from an agent of Fouché as to the three eventualities: 1stly, Louis XVIII.; 2ndly, the Duke of Orléans; and 3rdly, a Regency. This last Metternich thought the most dangerous experiment of all, but did not absolutely discard it. If, on the other hand, France decided in favour of Louis XVIII., then the Powers would authorise him to make a fresh agreement with the nation, and remove the *émigrés*; but if she pronounced for the Duke of Orléans, then they were

ready to call upon the elder line to resign. The plan for a meeting in Bâle was betrayed to Napoleon, who had Fouché's agent arrested, and in his place sent Fleury de Chaboulon, to whom the unsuspecting Ottenfels unbosomed himself. Napoleon told Carnot that he would have Fouché shot. Carnot replied that that would cost him his throne, as "the patriots," *i.e.*, the Jacobins, could only be controlled by Fouché. The latter had in the meanwhile heard of what had happened, and one morning, after the despatch of current business, with a careless gesture handed the Emperor the letter from Metternich which had started the whole intrigue, remarking that His Majesty would find in it a proof that an understanding with the Allies could be had on condition of a regency being appointed. Napoleon, unable to have his revenge, said nothing. He had wished to bring Vitrolles, the author of the Royalist rising at Toulouse, before a military tribunal; but Fouché prevented it at Monsieur's request, and because consideration for the Royalists was part of his future programme. While difficulties were accumulating at home, Napoleon's only ally, Murat, was on the point of dealing him the most severe blow of all, by beginning on the 17th of March, after renewed assurances of peace in Vienna, his campaign for the conquest of Italy, which ended two months later with his complete defeat, and the return of the Bourbons to Naples. In consequence of this event,

Talleyrand received in lieu of Benevento, which reverted to the Pope, the Neapolitan Duchy of Dino, with its large revenues, and, according to the probably much exaggerated calculation of Sainte-Beuve, six millions into the bargain. Talleyrand never took the new title, but transferred it to his nephew and the latter's wife, now Duchesse de Dino. Napoleon told Miot de Melito that Talleyrand had been bought by England, but admitted to his Minister Mollien that he would rather have had him come back to him than any one else.

Instead of this the coalition of Europe was now so firmly knit, to a great extent owing to Talleyrand's exertions, that in the royal residence at Ghent other preoccupations were more pressing than those inspired by Napoleon. A small band of Constitutionalists, with Guizot, Lally-Tollendal, Louis Bertin, and Jaucourt at their head, asserted that the monarchy could be saved by the open adoption of liberal doctrines. The intransigents, Monsieur, and the Duchess of Angoulême, who had just held out the longest in her heroic struggle at Bordeaux, implored the King to stand firm. At the end of April Fouché sent Vitrolles' wife to Ghent offering to get rid of Napoleon if the King would give him the Police and put Talleyrand at the head of the Government. Louis XVIII. thanked Fouché for his dangerous proposal, and said that his good services on behalf of France would always be

welcome. Wellington acquired the conviction that the Duke of Orléans was the contingency which was most feared at Ghent. The Duke had gone to London after the King's flight across the border. He first of all evaded, and then positively declined, an invitation to come to Ghent, dwelling on all the slights he had had to put up with and the mistakes of the Government. He protested his loyalty, but said openly that he felt himself put on the shelf, and that in his opinion the passions of the *émigré* party would deprive the Crown of that material and moral force without which, after the regrettable intervention of foreign troops, a second Restoration would share the fate of the first. He sent copies of both letters to the Prince Regent and the Duke of Wellington. The latter was acquainted with the Tsar's and Metternich's opinions, and knew that a strong party was in favour of the Duke of Orléans as a compromise between Bonaparte and the Bourbons. Like Liverpool and Castlereagh, he held that the Restoration, "even if it could only last for a short time," was the only guarantee of the peace of Europe, and must remain the goal. Liverpool regretted that Louis XVIII. had not employed Fouché in 1814. The Emperor Alexander urged a compromise with the Jacobins and the convocation of a National Assembly. In Prussia the anti-French war party was completely in the ascendant; only a few, like Count Goltz,

the envoy accredited to Louis XVIII., adhered to a monarchical solution. The spokesmen of the Royalists, Chateaubriand, who acted as Minister of the Interior at Ghent, and whose pathetic rhetoric enveloped the manifesto of constitutional monarchy with invectives against its enemies, and Pozzo di Borgo, who was at one and the same time the official representative of Alexander and a candidate for office under Louis XVIII., both agreed with the Constitutionalists in asking that Talleyrand should be sent for. "Drive him out of Vienna, we cannot do without him here," wrote Pozzo to Nesselrode on the 12th of May. The Duc de Richelieu, the most upright and the noblest of all the future statesmen of the Restoration, wrote on the 26th of May that his most earnest wish was to see a Talleyrand Ministry. Wellington insisted on it in his clear, positive way. The King had no alternative but to summon Talleyrand; but the latter alleged the necessity of waiting till the end of the Congress, and instead of coming, put the whole list of the sins of the first Restoration into the mouth of the Tsar. He wrote that he was obliged to give the King pain, but that a definite pronouncement of the Congress in his favour, such as he desired, was no longer attainable, because the Tsar's confidence in the firmness of the King's liberalism was shaken, and his personal sympathy for the monarch did not extend to the members of his family, with regard to whom

Alexander doubted that they would ever be prepared to meet the requirements and the views of the new generation. For these reasons the Emperor favoured the plan of a monarchy presided over by the Duke of Orléans, who, himself a Bourbon, had fought for constitutional ideas and for the tricolour. It was impossible to run counter to the tendencies of the age; the Tsar insisted on the appointment of a responsible Ministry and on the proclamation of a constitutional *régime* as the only means of reconciling hostile parties. This despatch, which acquainted Louis XVIII. with Talleyrand's programme, was brought to Ghent by the Marquis de Noailles. Talleyrand remained in Vienna, and maintained the King's authority there up to the last. It was not till the 10th of June, the day after the signing of the final document, that he started for Belgium.

The future that lay before the great standard-bearer of success in this crisis was uncertain enough. Napoleon might still win the day. And even in the contrary event, the position of the Monarchy was worse than in March 1814, when it was a factor of unknown magnitude. But now its measure had been taken. In opposition to all Talleyrand's warnings, Louis XVIII. had become a party-king of the reactionaries, and, in consequence, his claims were, if not abandoned, at all events called in question, by the leading Powers of the Continent. The situation

was so strained that all Talleyrand's opponents credited him with disloyal designs. But no proof of this has ever been adduced. A remark of his to Montrond, reported on the strength of oral testimony by Lord Dalling, that "the Duke of Orléans had claims to which the door was not then open, but, should it ever be open, there was no necessity for shutting it with vehemence," is no evidence against him. Instead of destroying his own creation he continued to do his best to save it. Legitimacy had survived the Revolution, and if it was the power which he proclaimed it to be, then it was also bound to outlast the events of 1814, the national conscience supplying it with the strength in which the Monarchy was deficient.

When Talleyrand arrived in Brussels on the 21st of June Waterloo had been fought three days before. Amid the lurid haze of defeat the figure of Napoleon vanished from politics into history. After his abdication, on the 22nd of June, a provisional Government was formed in Paris, presided over by Fouché, three of its five members being regicides. Officially it recognised the succession of Napoleon II., but a few days afterwards Fouché took advantage of the strife of factions in the Chamber to issue all public proclamations in the name of the French people. He then got rid of the inconvenient La Fayette, by sending him at the head of a deputation to the headquarters of the

allied sovereigns to treat concerning an armistice, the exclusion of the elder line of the Bourbons, and the choice of a successor, who was to be Napoleon II., the Duke of Orléans, or some foreign prince, as circumstances might dictate. Talleyrand's Memoirs state that he even went further, and that the cession of French territory was offered to the foreigner, with the view of obtaining the best possible constitution, which La Fayette had been looking for ever since 1789, and for which his search was always most active when circumstances precluded all possibility of finding it. The deputation was not received at all by the crowned heads; but Lord Stewart gave them his private opinion that they had no right to dispose of the Crown of France, which belonged to Louis XVIII. While this exchange of views was going on at Hagenau Fouché was conferring with Vitrolles in Paris. He then endeavoured to get into direct communication with Wellington, and sent Archambauld de Périgord to his brother Talleyrand.

In the meanwhile the King had left Ghent on the 22nd of June, on his way to France under the protection of the English, and had stopped the night at Mons. This was precisely what Talleyrand did not want. Nothing, he wrote to Jaucourt and then to Louis XVIII. himself, would make the King more detested than if he supplied a pretext for the assumption that the war had been undertaken on his behalf

and that he was responsible for its consequences. He ought never to re-enter France in the train of foreign Powers, but should transfer the seat of government to some point of the territory which was free from them—to Lyons, for instance, which was easy of access—there surround himself with a responsible Ministry, convoke the Chambers, and be ready to act in case the Allies, whose sentiments had been altered by victory, should be inclined to take advantage of it in a spirit hostile to France.

When Talleyrand arrived at Mons in the evening of the 22nd of June, accompanied by Baron Louis, he could only assume that the King had taken the advice of the extremists and was bent on a direct provocation, for he had missed Wellington in Brussels, and did not know that Louis XVIII. had chosen this route into France at the invitation of the English commander. He was also unaware that Blacas was in favour of his recall to office, and had decided to tender his own resignation in the last four-and-twenty hours. Immediately after his arrival at Mons he saw Jaucourt, Pozzo, Chateaubriand, and Beugnot, expressed himself with unconcealed bitterness, and resisted all their entreaties to go and see the King. They warned him that Louis XVIII. would leave Mons; "Il n'osera," according to Chateaubriand, was Talleyrand's reply. At four o'clock in the morning, long after he had gone to bed, the King's carriage drove up to the door. He

had already got into it when Talleyrand, who had hurried up, was announced, and Louis XVIII. went back into the hotel with the Minister. The interview was a short and stormy one. Its purport is given in the "Rapport fait au Roi pendant son Voyage de Gand à Paris," in which Talleyrand recapitulates the events that had taken place since March 1814, and concludes with an interpretation of legitimacy from the King's point of view. The source of power must not be confounded with its exercise, and the monarch must not indulge in the dangerous illusion that he is above the law. His sovereignty rests on the prestige and authority of long-inherited rights, but the belief in their Divine origin has disappeared in a sceptical age, and has been replaced by the conviction that kings exist for the good of their subjects. If the latter should ever arrive at the conclusion that the abuses of monarchy outweighed its advantages, then legitimacy will become an empty name. "My remarks," says Talleyrand, "did not make the slightest impression." The request to be allowed to proceed to Carlsbad for the benefit of his health was really a resignation, which the King accepted before he left by saying that "the cure would be sure to do him good."

"M. de Talleyrand bavait de colère," writes Chateaubriand; another eye-witness, Beugnot, says that he never saw the Prince more agreeable or more fascinating than at the dinner given by the wealthy

Mayor of Mons to those who had not left with the King. Beugnot was the only one of the party who decided to follow him to Cateau-Cambrésis, where a proclamation, composed by the Chancellor Dambray, and breathing a revengeful spirit, was issued. In the meanwhile, Pozzo had hastened to Wellington, who was not disposed to sacrifice the Monarchy and all hopes of peace to a handful of fanatics. He started to join the King, and wrote to Talleyrand that if he had talked over matters with him, and had been acquainted with the situation, he would have approved his decision. At the same time he begged him to follow the King. By the evening of June 25th, the latter thought prudent to summon the Ministers from Mons to Cambrai, which had been stormed by the English the day before. Then the venerable Cardinal de Périgord came to try and talk over his nephew. How far he succeeded is shown by a confidential letter from Talleyrand to Wellington. He writes as follows:—

"Mylord . . . Après le regret de n'avoir pas encore pu vous voir depuis ce que votre génie vient de faire et pour l'Europe et pour le Roi, j'ai eu pour première consolation de lire votre écriture, et je m'empresse de vous informer que je suivrai le conseil que vous me donnez, et que je partirai demain pour joindre le Roi et pour vous voir. . . . Le Roi en partant de Gand s'est mis dans les mains d'un parti qui a ses propres vues et qui se trouve en opposition

avec nos vrais principes nationaux et avec les principes proclamés par les Souverains Alliés. À la tête de ce parti est Monsieur: s'il réussit, le rétablissement de la tranquillité en France ne pourra être assuré, et le but que se proposent les Alliés, et que vous vous proposez vous-même, sera manqué.

"Il est indispensable que non-seulement le Roi ne dérive en aucune manière de la ligne constitutionnelle, mais que toutes ses mesures, tous ses actes en donnent la conviction à la France entière. Toute marche qui serait équivoque, et qui ressemblerait, de quelque lien que ce fût, à celle de Bonaparte, altérerait dans son principe cet élan de retour vers le Roi, de repentir, d'amour et de confiance dont j'ose dire qu'en ce moment l'immense majorité des Français est animée. Or ni Monsieur, ni la plupart des personnes qui sont autour du Roi n'ont donné des gages de leur attachement à la Charte que le Roi promet de maintenir, et qui est la seule base sur laquelle je puisse vouloir établir mon action ministérielle. Voilà ce qui m'avait effarouché hier, et ce que le Roi ne m'a pas donné le temps de lui développer. Rien cependant n'était plus simple: ma proclamation était prête; je voulais qu'elle fût concertée avec vous et qu'elle ne parût qu'avec votre approbation; ce n'est pas à vous, Mylord, que j'ai besoin de dire que si nous avons une Charte, le Roi doit établir l'unité et la solidarité dans son ministère. Ces deux choses sont inséparables: sans elles, dans l'état actuel de l'Europe, le principe de légitimité même, sauvé à Vienne tandis qu'on le perdait en France, ne pourrait se maintenir. L'action du ministère doit être non entravée, parcequ'il faut qu'il soit responsable, et ceux-là seuls qui seront responsables doivent composer le conseil du Roi. Or, ni les Princes ni les favoris ne pourront être

atteints par la responsabilité, et les circonstances dans lesquelles nous allons trouver la France sont assez graves pour que ceux qui se chargeront de la sauver et de la rendre une seconde fois à l'Europe n'ayent à répondre que de leurs propres fautes."

On the 26th of June Talleyrand and the King met again at Cambrai. The Minister laid before the Council a draft of a fresh proclamation composed by himself. On coming to the passage in which the King was made to say that he had been carried away by his affections, Monsieur interrupted with the question whether that was meant for him. Talleyrand replied that as he had led the discussion into that channel, it certainly was the fact that Monsieur had done a great deal of harm. "The Prince forgets himself," exclaimed Monsieur. "I am afraid it is so," was the reply, "but regard must be paid to truth." The Duc de Berry assumed a menacing attitude, and the King had to preserve order. The gist of the proclamation of Cambrai lay in the following passage: "There are times in which the best intentions are no protection to a government. My own has made mistakes, which experience alone can rectify. It shall not be lost upon us. I wish to make every concession which can save France, and will strengthen the Charter with every guarantee that can ensure the continuance of its benefits." The King assumed an attitude of protection between his people

and the Allies, issued an amnesty for all, with the exception of the traitors responsible for the revolt of the Hundred Days, and published ordinances which completed the Charter in a liberal sense. On the following day letters from Metternich arrived unexpectedly in Cambrai, from the headquarters of the allied sovereigns at Heidelberg, in which he declared for the Bourbons for the first time since March, a change due to Waterloo. In other respects he advised that the Government should be organised in a Royalist province, at a distance from the extremists and the allied armies, advice coinciding so exactly with Talleyrand's that it looks like an understanding between the two men. "Instead of acting in this way," writes Talleyrand, "we returned with the baggage of the English army." Wellington had persuaded but not convinced him; the Duke was master of the situation, like Alexander in 1814. He thought it the best policy to put an end to all other combinations by the prompt return of the King to Paris, and the *fait accompli* of the Restoration, and had made sure of Fouché for this purpose.

Fouché was busy pulling all the strings within his reach. His great difficulty was the army, which had made up its mind to resist; but this became less serious after Marshal Davoust had told the Chamber, on the 27th of June, that it was impossible for the troops to hold their ground against the approaching

enemy. Vitrolles remarked to Davoust that in that case a Restoration was unavoidable, and convinced him so strongly of its necessity that Davoust pronounced for the unconditional return of the King. Fouché had to moderate his zeal, and make him insist at all events on the grant of a complete amnesty, the adoption of the tricolour and the retention of the Chamber. On the same day Fouché succeeded in obtaining the consent of the popular representatives to the important address to Wellington, that France wished for a king who would rule as in England, free, but under the control of the law, and that the nation would offer him the Crown as soon as he had affixed his signature to the compact with her.

There was no time to be lost if this result was to be accomplished and the name of the unknown was to be once more Louis XVIII. The Allies had rejected all overtures for peace, and were marching on Paris. The Royalists were rising in the south of France. But in order to procure Wellington's consent to the cessation of hostilities Fouché offered, on the 28th of June, to surrender Napoleon, who since his abdication was guarded like a prisoner at Malmaison, to the English, "in any way that may be most suitable to the views of the British Government." On the following day, when the Prussians had reached St. Denis and Napoleon was obliged to fly to Rochefort, the feeling in the Assembly and the

army underwent a reaction, and a Bourbon monarchy was repudiated on the plea that it was inconsistent with the rights of the nation.

While these events were passing in the capital Fouché's commissioners delivered his letters to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke refused to suspend military operations, because the situation in France, even after Napoleon's departure, did not offer adequate guarantees to the Allies. He stated that he could only speak in his private capacity as regards future eventualities; in his opinion the unconditional recall of the Bourbons was the only mode of securing peace, and it ought to take place forthwith, to avoid all semblance of compulsion. When sounded as to his views of an Orleanist candidature, he replied that the Duke would be merely a well-born usurper. He refused even to entertain the idea of Napoleon II. He then handed the commissioners the proclamation of Cambrai, which had just arrived, and told them that an armistice could only be granted on condition that the French army left the capital and fell back on the left bank of the Loire.

The events of the preceding days had confirmed Wellington in the conviction that, as he wrote to Dumouriez, the Allies, and especially the Prussians, were indifferent or even hostile to the Restoration. Political and not military reasons made him restrain Blücher's impetuousness and prevent the storming of

Paris. But the more hopeless the chances of the Bourbons became in his eyes, the higher Fouché was bound to rise in his estimation. The English had come to the conclusion, months ago, that he was necessary. If Paris fell before Louis XVIII. was proclaimed King, he was indispensable. It was precisely this result that Talleyrand desired to obviate. It is not so much the text of his Memoirs, which style Fouché's co-operation as "une faiblesse" and call him "a used-up intriguer," as Barante's impartial testimony, that confirms the view that he did not want to have Fouché. In the lists of Ministers which he drew up in June 1815, Anglès appears as Minister of Police. He knew that Fouché expected a portfolio as the reward of his services, and what a degradation a colleague of this kind would be for the Ministry, and above all for himself as the head of it. But he lacked the moral dignity and authority which would have entitled him to decline to accept such a combination, and, as he had so often done before in his life, resigned himself to a situation which had passed beyond his control.

After the capitulation of Paris, which was signed on the 4th of July, he had to face the alternative. On that day an envoy from Fouché arrived forty-eight hours late at Wellington's headquarters in Gonesse, stating that Fouché wished to unbosom himself to the English commander—"d'épancher mon âme dans la

sienne." In the presence of Talleyrand, Pozzo, and Sir Charles Stuart, Wellington appointed Neuilly as the place of meeting, and stipulated in writing that the Chambers and the provisional Government, whose mandates were exhausted, should be dissolved, and the King acquainted with this step. Talleyrand inserted a paper, repeating the promises made at Cambrai and calling for the revocation of the orders of confiscation issued by Napoleon, an appeal to the constituencies, freedom of the Press, a hereditary *Pairie*, and a homogeneous Ministry. The next day Fouché made his appearance, accompanied by General Valence, Molé, and Manuel. He demanded a full amnesty and the tricolour cockade. Wellington and Talleyrand observed that these demands were incompatible with the authority of the Crown. The latter referred to Ney, and said that the tricolour was a signal for revolt. "Votre duc d'Otrante ne nous a rien dit du tout," he remarked to Vitrolles in the evening. It was not till the following morning that Fouché, who this time came alone, unmasked his batteries, in the presence of Castlereagh, who had just arrived from London. During the last few days he had succeeded in restraining the war-party in Paris by giving them an idea of Wellington's Royalist plans. If the Restoration was inevitable, it was advisable not to drive its opponents into desperate courses. But now, in Neuilly, he adopted a different tone. He took care

not to say that he had fomented revolutionary demonstrations in the capital, but drew an alarmist picture of the feelings that predominated there, and hinted that the Chambers and the Government would follow the army across the Loire. The plenipotentiaries whom he had sent to the sovereigns had returned the day before, their mission being a complete failure. But it turned out useful to Fouché that La Fayette, in one of his usual fits of self-deception, had taken upon himself to assure the Chamber that it was perfectly free to choose, not only the constitution, but the sovereign. Wellington, who had more accurate information through Lord Stewart, declared that the report was false; but, on the other hand, he knew that the allied sovereigns would hurry on in advance of their armies on the news of the capitulation of Paris, and arrive there in a few days. The thing was to anticipate them with the entry of the King, and make sure of Fouché's co-operation for this purpose. Wellington met with assistance from an unexpected quarter. The King had arrived in the neighbouring *château* of Arnouville the day before. There Monsieur and the Bailli de Crussol, the *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* of the Royalist party, implored him to consent to Fouché being summoned: "He has saved us all," said Crussol to Vitrolles. Pasquier and Marshal Macdonald, whom Louis XVIII. had taken into his confidence, came from Paris and confirmed

the statement that a recognition of the King by the municipal council could not be attempted without the risk of sanguinary excesses. Thus it came about that Talleyrand returned to Neuilly with Fouché's appointment to the Ministry of Police. Before they went to dinner it was in his hands and he had come to terms with Talleyrand and pledged himself to carry the matter through. He saw the King the same evening at St. Denis. The interview was short. Chateaubriand was waiting in the ante-chamber for an audience when Fouché and Talleyrand came out, "le vice appuyé sur le bras du crime." Chateaubriand had remained at Mons with Talleyrand, because he thought that the King would be lost without him. On Louis XVIII. asking him what he had to say he replied: "Sire, my opinion is that it is all up with the Monarchy." "I agree with you," rejoined the King. On this occasion the poet showed more sagacity than the statesman. The public drew no distinction between the celebrant and the acolyte, or said, like De Maistre with all the injustice of party hatred, "better even Fouché than Talleyrand."

In Paris Fouché had concealed the true motive of his journeys to Neuilly. On the following morning the Prussians and the English entered the city. Blücher demanded a war contribution of one hundred millions and the evacuation of the Tuileries. The officer who brought this demand found the members

of the Government assembled in the royal palace ; not far off, in the Palais Bourbon, the Chambers were sitting, absorbed up to the last in personal quarrels and theoretical discussion of constitutions. At this point came the message from Fouché that the Government, being deprived of its freedom of action, was on the point of dissolution, and that the allied sovereigns demanded the re-instatement of Louis XVIII., who was about to enter the capital. Thus the episode of the Hundred Days concluded with a lie, and, as Talleyrand writes, "the difficulties began."

The great thing was to appease the Emperor Alexander, and an attempt was made by offering two of his friends places in the Ministry. Pozzo di Borgo was to be Minister of the Interior ; the Household was offered to the Duc of Richelieu, who had been a naturalised Russian subject since 1789, and had made a reputation by his excellent administration of the Crimea. But Richelieu resorted to various pretexts to avoid becoming Fouché's colleague. Pozzo, who styled Fouché's behaviour to the Chambers "une infamie," declined on this occasion and subsequently. Pasquier, Baron Louis, Jaucourt, and Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr were appointed ; and a young and unknown man, named Decazes, who was destined to supplant Blacas in the King's favour, was made Prefect of Police. These nominations were followed by the entry of Louis XVIII. into Paris. On the following

day Blücher threatened to blow up the Pont Jéna. "Take me to the bridge and blow me up with it," wrote the old King to Talleyrand, adopting an idea of Beugnot's. On the 10th of July the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia arrived. The contribution was reduced from a hundred to eight millions, the bridge was renamed and thus saved from destruction. But Talleyrand failed to propitiate Alexander, who shrouded his own intentions in secrecy, and excluded him from all the negotiations with the Allies. On this occasion the Minister was unable to save the works of art which had been brought to France from foreign countries, or to obtain a modification of the terms for the support of the army of occupation. Talleyrand carried the promised freedom of the Press, a hereditary peerage, and the creation of ninety-four new peers against the King's wishes; but was unsuccessful in his opposition to the reinstatement of the Royal household troops which had been so unpopular in 1814. He demanded the recall of the Duc d'Angoulême when the rising in the South, "la terreur blanche," broke out with all its horrors, and the Prince, who intervened on his own responsibility, failed to protect the victims of Royalist-Catholic fanaticism. Talleyrand ran his pen through half the names on the proscription list which the reactionary party forced out of Fouché, but signed the decrees bringing Ney before a court-martial, for which reason he afterwards declined to sit in judgment

on him as a peer. Then followed an unexpected episode. In July Fouché read to the Council of Ministers two reports on the situation, stating that civil war would be the inevitable consequence of the Royalist reaction. Publicity was given to these reports, not, as even Wellington supposed, by Fouché's enemies, but by the Minister himself. After this monstrous breach of official secrecy, Talleyrand thought the time had come to get rid of a colleague who had speedily lost all importance and retained only power to do harm. On the 18th of September Fouché left the Cabinet to go as envoy to Dresden for a short time. When this matter had been settled Talleyrand proceeded to put a far more important resolve into execution—the retirement of the whole Ministry. There were two motives especially which prompted him to take this step. The country was a prey to party hatred, and the new elections had resulted in the return of the "Chambre introuvable," to the alarm of Louis XVIII.; the adherents of Monsieur had a majority, and a religious reaction was now added to the political one. Of not less importance for Talleyrand was the change in the Emperor Alexander's attitude. Confronted with the alternative of supporting the violent anti-French policy of Prussia and her demand for cession of French territory or of joining England in maintaining the relative integrity of the country, he had, contrary to all expectation,

adopted the latter course. His anti-Bourbon views gave place to a conviction that the fall of the Monarchy, which was bound to remain liberal in its tendencies, would be the signal for a fresh outburst of revolutionary passion in Europe, and that this catastrophe or another despairing struggle would be inevitable if France were weakened or deprived of whole provinces, in the way suggested by Prussia. Another motive was to be found in the plan advocated by Capodistrias, to obtain the support of France for Russia's designs in the East and for the liberation of Greece. But politics alone did not turn the scale The psychological factor had always to be taken into account in Alexander's decisions, and just at that moment he was under feminine influence, and absorbed in the mystic idea of the Holy Alliance. He was also not insensible to the grateful deference now shown him by Louis XVIII., in complete contrast to the latter's attitude in 1814. At that time Talleyrand and his English supporters had to convince the reluctant Tsar of the necessity of the Restoration. Now it was he who championed French interests with more energy than the English. It was Talleyrand's policy which Alexander now carried out in the councils of Europe, but with this one condition, that Talleyrand himself was to disappear from the scene.

A peculiar lassitude was noticeable in Talleyrand at this time. His colleagues in the Ministry found

him indolent and physically and morally changed. He left them without information at critical moments, took no interest in the progress of the elections, neglected even Parliamentarians,—as, for instance, Lainé, who was destined to become a party-leader,—quarrelled with his friend Baron Louis about some financial point, and seemed as constitutional Minister to lack the nerve and energy which had never failed him as diplomatist. The cause of the change is hinted at by Pozzo, and openly stated by Pasquier, who says that he was under the influence of an attachment, and a prey to the apprehension that the person who inspired it wished by remaining in Vienna to signify her intention to part from him. This was the Duchess of Dino, who called herself a German, and retained up to an advanced age the attractive qualities which had captivated Talleyrand. He was in this state of mind when he received the ultimatum from the Powers, framed in opposition to Wellington's and Castlereagh's views, with the conditional assent of Austria and against the will of Russia, and at last despatched at the urgent solicitation of Prussia. Its purport had been known since the 16th of September. On the 21st of September Talleyrand sent his reply.

In his note he takes his stand on the doctrines expounded at the Congress of Vienna. No right of conquest can prevail against the King, whose hereditary title has never been questioned. The declara-

tion of the Powers of March 13th and the treaty of March 25th expressly state that the maintenance of the peace of Paris was the object of the war. For these Powers Louis XVIII. is an ally and not an enemy. But in view of the sacrifices incurred chiefly on behalf of France he admits in principle the possibility of a cession of territory, but only in respect of the conquests made since 1791. He also consents to the payment of an indemnity and to the temporary occupation of part of French territory by the allied troops, in accordance with definite arrangements to be made by both parties, and subject to the proviso that the proposed term of seven years is dropped as out of the question. If these bases of negotiation are not accepted, then the Minister is not empowered to treat further.

The sovereign into whose mouth Talleyrand put this haughty, aggressive language had no armed force, for the army on the Loire had been disbanded, and a new one was not yet formed. Some of the Allies' demands were left unnoticed and others simply rejected. The note went so far beyond the *maximum* of concession allowable that all the Ministers of the allied Powers answered it in a most uncompromising tone. Repudiating the theory of the inviolability of the old French territory as a revolutionary one, they based their claim, not on conquest, but on the right to indemnity, and appealed to the necessity of obtain-

ing guarantees for peace in the future. A special conference was to be held for the purpose of protesting formally against the language used by the French Minister at the end of the note. But matters never got so far as this. Talleyrand's resolve to leave office was irrevocably taken on the 16th of September, the day on which the terms of the Allies became known to him. With the exception of Fouché, who was no longer consulted, all the Ministers approved his decision, and commissioned Pasquier to acquaint the King with it on the 17th. It was not till the latter had fulfilled his mission and Louis XVIII. had signified his consent that Talleyrand had an interview with the King.

The Chambers were on the point of meeting. In the darkest hour of the Monarchy, Talleyrand had never wavered in his confident assertion that France was constitutional and royalist at heart. But the first electoral ballot of the Restoration put back the clock of history by five-and-twenty years, and responded to the challenge of the Constitutionalist by declaring that she was royalist and reactionary. It would have been a fruitless task for a man of Talleyrand's antecedents to bandy words with *émigrés* and country gentlemen, with malcontents of all classes and irreconcilables of every shade. That had to be left to those who could meet "the white Jacobins," as the Duc de Richelieu called them,

with an unblemished political record, and who were ready to set, and actually did set, the example of abandoning all idea of retaliation. But Talleyrand's calculation was that he would return to power with increased authority as soon as this first storm had blown over, provided that his refusal to accept the ultimatum of the Allies was the real and ostensible reason of his resignation. "Let us resign on this point," he said to his colleagues on the 16th of September; "then public opinion will be strongly in our favour, and every Ministry which concedes what we have refused will be impossible." In his Memoirs he states that the reason of his retirement was that the King declined to maintain the position taken up in the note of September 21st. The assertion is untrue in this form, for the note deliberately provoked the reception which it met with at the hands of the Powers. But Talleyrand's calculation also proved a mistaken one, and it was the Emperor Alexander who brought about this.

Alexander had already settled with the King that the Duc de Richelieu should succeed Talleyrand, promising in that event more favourable terms from the Allies. On Richelieu hesitating, he showed him the map in which Knesebeck and Humboldt had drawn a line severing Vauban's ring of fortresses from France. "You see here what is to become of France," said Alexander; "but my signature is not

there, and they will never obtain it." The protest of Louis XVIII. to the Tsar against the demands of the Powers, which was dated the 23rd of September, the day of Talleyrand's resignation, was drafted by Pozzo in concert with his sovereign, and charged Austria and Prussia with aiming at the annihilation of France. Alexander gave Knesebeck's map as a *souvenir* to the Duc de Richelieu, who afterwards asserted that he would have succeeded in saving Savoy as well, but for the admissions of Talleyrand in the note of September 21st.

"It is easier to give up a badge than an individual," remarked the King at Arnouville, when he refused to exchange the tricolour for the white cockade and consented to employ Fouché. He had got rid of Fouché, and now that Talleyrand's turn had come, the latter was able to see with what ill-concealed delight Louis XVIII. parted from him. Monsieur breathed again, and the pleasure which the event gave him lent a sort of magnanimity to his feelings. "There's something of the gentleman in him still," he remarked to Vitrolles; "but in spite of his intelligence he does not seem to me to have adopted the proper course. When we returned he ought to have settled his affairs with the Pope, then he would have been received into the bosom of the Church and have become a Cardinal. I know it is said that he still has the inclinations of youth. I congratulate him; *gaudeant bene nati.*

No one has the right to interfere in that and in his private life, as long as public scandal is avoided." Vitrolles understood his royal friend to mean that a married priest might become a Cardinal, and that a Cardinal might have mistresses.

Talleyrand's confident expectation that he would be recalled after a short time as the indispensable adviser of the Restoration was due in the first place to his ignorance of the arrangements with Alexander. But he had also underrated the depth of the ingratitude of the Bourbons. Louis XVIII. repaid the restorer of his dynasty with his sarcasms and the sinecure of High Chamberlain at a salary of one hundred thousand francs. During the fifteen years which elapsed between the second Peace of Paris and the Revolution of 1830, the founder of the principle of Legitimacy was obliged to play the part of spectator. The Memoirs contain the following passage: "Les anciennes dynasties placent leur origine dans le ciel : le 'Par la grâce de Dieu' est un protocole d'ingratitude."

These words make an axiom of a personal experience, which dated back to 1791 and included the eldest of the three brothers, with whom, for the third time in the history of France, a royal dynasty came to an end. Talleyrand settled his account with the Restoration in his own peculiar way ; he did not undermine it, he outlasted it.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE REVOLUTION OF 1830.—TALLEYRAND AMBASSADOR OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN LONDON.—THE END.

1815—1838.

A YEAR went by. The second Peace of Paris had been signed by the Duc de Richelieu. The strange conflict, in which Louis XVIII. was forced against his own inclinations to defend the Monarchy and the Charter against the policy of his brother and the attacks of the Royalist reactionaries, was drawing to a close. Blacas' successor in the King's favour, the energetic and able young Minister of Police, Decazes, had persuaded the Monarch to issue his ordinance of September 5th, 1816, dissolving the Chamber and ordering new elections, in which the ultras were defeated, and the supporters of the Government obtained a large majority. It was a *coup d'état* organised by Decazes to save the threatened constitution. Chateaubriand answered him, against the King's wishes, with the famous pamphlet "La Monarchie selon la Charte," in which the Royalists were invited to use their constitutional rights in English fashion as a means of defence

"against the liberals and revolutionists of the Cabinet"; in other words, the Duc de Richelieu and his colleagues. The Royalists turned themselves into parliamentarians, and violently reproached their political antagonists with despotic conduct. Chateaubriand lost his pension and rank of Minister, and became the idol of the extremists. The King exercised his right to appoint the President of the Chamber in favour of Pasquier, whose views were those of the moderate majority of the new assembly. Shortly afterwards Talleyrand met him in the reception-rooms of the English Embassy, and addressed him loudly enough to be heard by the bystanders: "I hope you will not drag the Chamber over which you preside into the dirt of the Police." Pasquier's silence did not prevent Talleyrand from posing as an opponent of Decazes up to the end. "I am constitutional and anti-ministerial," he said to the Royalists; "a Cabinet which enslaves and degrades France will never have my support." He appealed to the opinion of Canning, who was then in Paris, and who certainly inclined to the view that Monsieur might succeed in his hazardous enterprise, and in a letter to Castlereagh stated that Pozzo's intrigues and Russia's despotic interference in French affairs were the cause of the crisis. Public opinion became so excited that the King was obliged to banish Talleyrand from the Court for a few months. The

disgrace in this shape was only temporary, but its ultimate consequences were not so. Talleyrand's Memoirs were composed in the course of the year 1816, in the enforced leisure of private life, under the roof of the Hôtel St. Florentin, which had continued to be the rendez-vous of fashionable society and was now a centre for political malcontents, and still more at Valençay, where the master of the house liked to keep up a grand establishment in accordance with old traditions. Thoroughly episodical in form, and only interspersed with personal impressions and recollections in the period of the author's early life, they were written with a definite object, and for no less a reader than Louis XVIII. himself. This explains the disappointment which posterity experienced when the Memoirs were published more than fifty years after his death. The private life of the individual is shrouded by a veil, which is only incidentally lifted. The inner man is hidden from public view, and psychological problems are left untouched. The writer is a statesman addressing his sovereign, and subordinating all secondary considerations to the one great aim of presenting a complete and consistent picture of his statesmanship, for which he claims the signal merit of having both sought and secured the peace of Europe and the restoration of the dynasty. Louis XVIII. was to have no excuse for continuing to forget

services of such inestimable value. That is the object of the Memoirs. To it the Constitutionalist of 1789 sacrifices without a moment's hesitation the brilliant achievements of his early manhood, probably the only part of his career which was inspired by genuine conviction. Of his share in the labours of the Constituent Assembly, which on two occasions was of a decisive nature, there is not one single syllable. Talleyrand meets the clerical reaction raging around him with the frank admission that he regrets the part which he took in the enactment of the civil constitution of the clergy.

On the other hand, he could refer with a satisfaction which we can well understand to the memorable day in June 1789, when he made a solemn but fruitless appeal to the expiring Monarchy to face the storm, and implored the Comte d'Artois to remain at his post, and when the helplessness of the King and the flight of the Prince restored the Constitutionalists their freedom of action. His verdict on the course of events after the 10th of August, 1892—so hopelessly chaotic that he even disputed its title to serve as instruction for future generations—is not a concession to the current of opinion prevailing in 1816, but the expression of his sincere conviction. It is not till 1797 that he once more resumes the thread, the time when he was appointed Minister of the Directory, and undertook the patriotic task of "repairing blunders

which he had not committed, after having given advice which was not followed." These words of the Duc de Broglie are just as applicable to the part played by Talleyrand under the Empire. He makes no secret of the admiration and sympathy with which the youthful conqueror of Italy and the First Consul inspired him. But the Emperor soon incurs his disapproval, and he points out that here too his functions were of a passive nature, chiefly directed towards the prevention of still greater mischief. The following is addressed to the legitimate monarch: "It was impossible to restore the Monarchy to France as she was in the year 1797. To compass this result several intermediate governments" ("des régimes intermédiaires") "were necessary. . . . How fervent must be the gratitude of Louis XVIII., and how earnest his endeavour to make France great and happy, when he reflects on all that had to take place after 1803 to prepare the way for his return." Then comes a passage in which he assists the King's memory. The author of the Restoration relates once more how, in the twin capacity of Minister and ambassador, without an army and without allies, he became undisputed master of the diplomatic situation, in the opening stages of which his right to appear had been called in question. The rest was left for Louis XVIII. to complete. The Memoirs are not an apology, and do not claim to be a defence. They are a piece of special pleading, which

a lucky chance might throw into the King's hands, and which the author was not particularly anxious to conceal. Barante, Chateaubriand, and Vitrolles were favoured with extracts from them. The chapter on the Duke of Orléans, seven pages of which were suppressed just before publication, in which the legitimacy of the younger line is supposed to have been called in question, would not have prevented the King from reading them. But there is nothing to prove that he ever read them, and even if he did so, they did not make him change his mind.

Talleyrand, however, repeatedly thought that his return to office was close at hand, especially in 1820, after the assassination of the Duc de Berry and the fall of Decazes, when he offered Count Villèle a seat in the Cabinet in case he was entrusted with the formation of one. But the latter sent no answer, because he knew that the King had decided to have a Richelieu Ministry. When this Ministry brought in a law for the censorship of the Press under pressure from the extreme Right, Talleyrand responded, on the 24th of July, 1821, with a sort of liberal manifesto in the Chamber of Peers. He raised a warning voice against the unwisdom of opposing what the best and most enlightened minds of the age had recognised as necessary for society, touched on the course of intellectual development since the Reformation, commended the labours of the Constituent Assembly, because it

had, in spite of many errors, created a new public law, advocated the liberty of the Press as the necessary accompaniment of representative institutions, and concluded with the often quoted words : " De nos jours il n'est pas facile de tromper longtemps. Il y a quelqu'un qui a plus d'esprit que Voltaire, plus d'esprit que Bonaparte, plus d'esprit que chacun des ministres passés, présents, à venir, c'est tout le monde. S'engager, ou du moins persister dans une lutte où tout le monde se croit intéressé, c'est une faute, et aujourd'hui toutes les fautes politiques sont dangereuses." The bill was withdrawn in the following year by the Villèle Ministry, but only to be replaced by more stringent measures, and then the conflict between the Liberals and Absolutists was transferred to the field of foreign politics. The Revolution was triumphant in Spain. The King was deprived of his liberty, and the country threatened with complete anarchy. The Emperor Alexander and the French extremists, whose views he now shared, declared that France was in danger, and strongly urged an armed intervention. At the Congress of Verona Chateaubriand forced it on his own Ministry. The internal affairs of Spain had scarcely anything to say to this step. It was designed to restore prestige to the white flag, and to re-invest the country with the authority of which the treaties of 1815 had deprived it. The Holy Alliance made good the shortcomings of

the Congress of Vienna. Talleyrand protested. His solemn assertion, that he had tried to thwart Napoleon's policy in Spain, found no credence, and his prophecy of a defeat was refuted by the victory of Trocadero. He had to circulate his speech by means of the Press, for the premature close of the debate prevented him from delivering it. But, notwithstanding this, his charge that the defence of the Monarchy in Spain was only a pretext for the counter-revolution made a deep impression, and his assertion that the crusade in favour of Ferdinand VII. had not contributed to the real strength of the Royalist cause was justified by events.

This was the last occasion on which Talleyrand took part in the parliamentary debates of the Restoration. But his policy of peace abroad, of moderation and conciliation at home, and his sympathy for English institutions and ideas brought him into proximity with the doctrinaire group of similar tendencies, the leaders of which were the Duc de Broglie in the Peers, and Royer-Collard, Barante, and Guizot in the Chamber of Deputies and the Press. He left it to them to upset one Ministry after another, until a succession of victories brought them face to face with the Polignac Ministry, because they had neglected the opportunity of making terms with Martignac, the wisest adviser of the Crown. "He was our last hope," was the subsequent admission of the Duc de

Broglie, whose open hostility to the dynasty, combined with the revengefulness of Chateaubriand, who had joined the Opposition, accelerated the catastrophe. Talleyrand did nothing to prevent it, but he disdained to aid in the destruction of his own creation. The ecclesiastical side of the conflict, the extraordinary evolution, which led the tragic genius of the Abbé de La Mennais from theocratic absolutism to the doctrines of liberal Catholicism, and finally to the watchword of the future, the alliance of the Church with democracy, had no interest for him. Problems which lay too deep he left untouched. He disposed of individuals and situations by means of epigrams. Louis XVIII. was saying one day that it was an advantage that the deputies received no payment, and so cost the State nothing. "Oh, Sire, gratuites, que cela sera cher," replied Talleyrand. When some one was applying for an appointment, and among other things urged that he had been in Ghent, Talleyrand asked: "In Ghent, are you sure of that?" —"What do you mean?"—"Well, tell me plainly whether you were actually in Ghent or whether you only returned from it."—"I do not understand."— "You see, the case stands thus: there were about eight hundred Royalists in Ghent, not more, and, according to my calculation, fifty thousand have already returned from there." On somebody remarking that there were still consciences to be found in the

Chamber of Peers, he rejoined: "Not a doubt of it; Sémonville alone has at least two." "Ce pauvre Blacas," said the King on one occasion, "il aime la France, il m'aime, mais on dit qu'il est suffisant." "Oh oui, Sire, suffisant et insuffisant," was Talleyrand's correction. "Oh, mon Dieu, quel évènement!" exclaimed a lady on hearing the news of Napoleon's death; whereupon he quietly remarked, "Ce n'est plus un évènement, c'est une nouvelle." "Comment vont les affaires?" asked a lady who squinted. "Comme vous voyez," was the reply. Madame de Staël's daughter, the serious-minded and critically-inclined Duchess de Broglie, once wondered what the charm could have been of which her mother had so often spoken to her. But even she was obliged to admit that she saw traces of it in the courteous kindliness of the old man, in his whole demeanour, in the original combination of a distant superiority with gentleness, repose, and cheerfulness, which survived every disillusion and gave a flavour of youthful freshness to his declining years. A thoroughly competent judge, Count Molé, in analysing Talleyrand's career was struck by the peculiar mixture of elegant manners, moral laxity, and high intellectual culture, in which the spirit of two epochs was expressed for the last time. Talleyrand preserved his equanimity when the wealth, the acquisition of which has left an indelible stain on his reputation, to a great extent disappeared

in a bankruptcy, the worst consequences of which were averted by the business-like prudence of the Duchess of Dino. After this he lived a great deal at Valençay, and indulged in the pleasure of thinking that the trees which he planted would afford shade to others in years to come. Sometimes he spent the winter in Provence ; he read much, observed still more, wrote obliging, kindly letters, which said little, and kept himself in readiness for all eventualities, until Charles X., making use of the welcome pretext with which the blindness of the Opposition supplied him, replaced the Martignac Ministry by the safety-brake which worked on the Polignac system. The second Restoration, which had started in the borrowed light of the Holy Alliance, ended in the hallucinations of a mystic. Six weeks before the end, on the 14th of June, 1830, Talleyrand wrote to Barante : "Nous marchons vers un monde inconnu, sans pilote et sans boussole ; il n'y a qu'une chose qui soit certaine, c'est que tout cela finira par un naufrage. . . . La révolution d'Angleterre a duré au-delà d'un demi-siècle. La nôtre n'en est qu'à sa quarantième année, ainsi je ne puis, en aucune manière, espérer d'en voir la fin . . . Ceux qui la verront n'auront pas à s'en féliciter." In the Memoirs he regrets in 1830 the slip of memory which made him forget in 1815 that, according to Fox's *dictum*, "a Restoration is the worst of all revolutions." And even on his death-bed, in his letter to the Archbishop

of Paris, he refers to the Revolution "which has now lasted fifty years."

He was in Paris during the Revolution of July. According to Lord Dalling, whose account was given him by an actor in the events related, he waited till the 29th, when the triumph of the insurrection was decided, and then sent his private secretary to obtain information at St. Cloud, where the King was endeavouring to yield at the eleventh hour by promising to withdraw the ordinances. Before the messenger returned with the news that all was lost, Talleyrand had a conference with the Generals Sebastiani and Gérard, two influential persons of the day, who still believed in the possibility of coming to terms with Charles X. He then retired to his room for a couple of hours and gave himself up to reflection. Since 1823 he had been in somewhat intimate social relations with the Duke of Orléans and his family, especially with Madame Adelaide, the Duke's gifted and energetic sister. He now sent the same secretary to Neuilly, with a few lines of credentials, and a verbal message to the effect that the Duke should lose no time in coming to Paris and should take the title of Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom: "le reste viendra." The Princess understood at once. "Ce bon prince," she said; "j'étais sûre qu'il ne nous oublierait pas." It was she who made her brother take this step, and was afterwards

Talleyrand's confidante in politics. Up to this point Louis Philippe had confined himself to stating that he would not leave the country, and he put off coming to Paris till the evening of July 30th. The choice lay between him and a Republic with La Fayette for a figure-head. The Doctrinaires were determined to have nothing to do with this dangerous stage-hero, and to reduce the revolutionary element in "the French 1688" to a minimum. As far back as 1815 the Duc de Broglie had called the younger line "the only hope of well-disposed sensible people," thereby indicating his own solution of the problem. It was he who wanted to blend the old order of things with the new by maintaining the traditions of the Monarchy and giving the new King the title of Philippe VII. The idea rested on a misconception of the nature of the Monarchy, which Talleyrand never entertained. Legitimacy perished with Charles X. and by his hand. Constitutional government might be saved from the wreck. Talleyrand's justification of his action in 1830 is a paraphrase of Napoleon's saying: "I found the French Crown lying on the ground and I took it up."

But he was well aware that it was a democratic diadem and not the crown of lilies that Louis Philippe had to accept, "non parceque, mais quoique Bourbon." When subsequently, in 1832, there was a difference of opinion between him and his sovereign, Talley-

rand wrote the following words to Sebastiani from London, which were meant for Louis Philippe's eye, and contained probably the severest rebuke ever addressed to a king: "Le Roi sait que je ne suis pas dynastique. J'ai servi depuis Louis XVI. tous les gouvernements par attachement à mon pays. Je les ai abandonnés aussitôt qu'ils sacrifiaient les intérêts de la France à des interêts individuels. Si le Roi veut écouter des velléités de famille, il ne doit pas compter sur moi." Louis Philippe became King of the French on the 9th of August; on the 5th of September he appointed Prince Talleyrand ambassador in London, because in the actual situation of affairs this post was of more importance than the Foreign Office in Paris. While a new coalition, as in the days of Pillnitz, seemed to threaten the Revolution in France, the new sovereign and the experienced statesman were both firmly agreed that peace was not to be disturbed in Europe.

The Revolution of July was scarcely over when Talleyrand renewed his old diplomatic relations, and sent word to Prince Metternich by means of a semi-official agent that with his co-operation peace might be preserved from the attacks of French anarchists and foreign agitators, adding that he answered for the peaceful intentions of the Duke of Orléans and the future Monarchy. He was in constant communication with the English ambassador. Pozzo di Borgo

forfeited the good graces of his sovereign because he too maintained that Louis Philippe alone was determined to protect Europe from the propaganda of the Revolution. The question was whether he had the power to carry out his intentions. The young lions in Paris announced that the movement was directed against the treaties of 1815; they demanded Savoy and the Rhine, and revenge for Waterloo,—and that at a time when the whole French army did not amount to more than seventy-eight thousand men. The news of the outbreak of the Revolution in Brussels on the 25th of August was a source of unbounded rejoicing. Prince Polignac, who expected this event in 1829, had anticipated it by making overtures for a Russian alliance, and had proposed to recast the map of Europe by obtaining Belgium for France. "Why not the Rhine instead?" was the only objection that the Dauphin had to make. No one doubted now that the new government would come to the aid of the insurgents. Prussia collected a third army corps on the Rhine. The Emperor Nicholas promised his sister in Holland sixty thousand men. The leaders of the Tory Cabinet in London were the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, the same statesmen who had founded the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a bulwark of British interests on the Continent. At the first glance it seemed hopeless to attempt to play off the English alliance against the Powers of

Eastern Europe. But this was precisely Talleyrand's intention, and it was inspired by well-weighed considerations. England was on the eve of the Reform movement, and hailed the conflict of July as a national victory. Since 1815 Canning had made his protest against the reactionary character of the Holy Alliance, "votre ennemie personnelle," as Sebastiani called it in a letter to Talleyrand. Canning's counter-move to Troppau and Verona, to the Spanish expedition and Metternich's policy of coercion in Italy, was the independence of the Spanish colonies and the strategy which led to the emancipation of Greece and made England the great protectress of Liberalism. She could not allow Belgium to become French; but just as little could English statesmen now dream of employing force against a people which had taken up arms in defence of its nationality and its political and religious freedom. On the 31st of August, the same day on which England recognised the Monarchy of July, Louis Philippe's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Molé, informed the Prussian ambassador that the crossing of the Netherlands frontier by Prussian troops would entail the occupation of the western frontier of Belgium by the French. On the 25th of September Talleyrand arrived in London; five days afterwards news arrived there that the Dutch had evacuated Brussels; all hope of a reconciliation between the Belgians and the House of Nassau

disappeared, and Belgium tore up the treaties of 1815 by her declaration of independence. On the 6th of October the French ambassador took the opportunity presented by his first audience with William IV. to proclaim the identity of French and English interests and the principle of non-intervention which was common to both. France gave up all idea of interfering in Belgium, or of claiming an alteration of frontier, as well as of placing a French prince on the Belgian throne. She also demanded that the establishment of the new state should be settled by the joint deliberation of the five great Powers at the same conference which was then sitting in London to regulate the affairs of Greece. As on the 3rd of January, 1815, in Vienna, renunciation of conquest was the basis of the alliance which set up the right of peoples to control their own destinies in antagonism to the continental league. In the next few days the Powers refused to grant the King of the Netherlands the help for which he asked, and a month later Europe had, although reluctantly enough, recognised the Monarchy of 1830. In London, where Talleyrand found "his friends among the Tories, and his interests among the Whigs," his authority increased in proportion as the diplomatists of Europe gained experience of the clear-sighted moderation which made a policy of patience, and in considering exclusively French interests never lost sight of those of Europe. The

Duke of Wellington, as in former days, was under the spell of his personal charm. The wife of the Russian ambassador, Princess Lieven, who had influence over Lord Grey, a spoilt, intriguing, and aggressive woman, played into Talleyrand's hands. "You may say what you like: the situation in France is a flagrant usurpation," she exclaimed to him at their first meeting. "No doubt," he retorted; "it is only a pity that it did not come to pass fifteen years earlier, in accordance with the wishes of your master, the Emperor Alexander." As in 1792, during his first mission to England, his greatest difficulties were not in London but in Paris. The jealousy of Molé, who owed him his promotion to the Peerage under Louis XVIII., the plebeian insolence with which the *bourgeois* Ministers treated him, the aristocratic representative of a former age, the senseless vacillation of Laffitte and his cowardly capitulation to the Paris mob, all combined to thwart and upset the ambassador's diplomacy. When the Poles and then the Italians followed the lead of the July Revolution, and the French Government observed a passive attitude, the revolutionary Press called Talleyrand a traitor. He had carefully considered the possibility of a peaceful intervention at Warsaw, but was obliged to abandon the plan, because England was absorbed with the Reform Bill and Belgium and would not agree to it. Since the 16th of November, 1830, Lord Grey's administration

had succeeded the Tory Cabinet, and Lord Palmerston, who was Foreign Secretary, at first mistrusted Talleyrand so completely that he credited him with the intention of obtaining an extension of territory for France in spite of all his assurances. His despatches to Louis Philippe prove the contrary. He was never weary of repeating: "L'Europe s'arrangera de nous tranquilles et s'en arrangera parfaitement. De nous propagandistes, elle ne s'arrangera jamais." Palmerston failed to see that Talleyrand had to reckon with the hostile feeling in Paris, and invite refusals firstly with regard to Luxemburg and then the fortresses of Philippeville and Marienburg, in order to be able to cool the warlike ardour of the French with the wet blanket of the English declaration that "not a kitchen garden or a vineyard could be ceded to France, otherwise the principle would be sacrificed and it would only be a question of more or less concession." In his interviews with the English Secretary of State he spoke of extension of territory and an eventual partition of Belgium, but at the conference he used different language: "Diplomatic France has ceased to exist," he said with a mixture of familiarity and condescension to his colleagues; "I am only a man of some experience, discussing public affairs with old friends." There was nothing he disliked more than the instructions of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sebastiani, and he treated direct

with the King, mostly through Madame Adelaide. This explains how he ventured to sign, in opposition to the Government, which disavowed him, the protocols of January 20th and 27th, 1831, which cut off Luxemburg from Belgium and constituted her a neutral state with the frontiers of 1790 under the protectorate of the five Powers. His position became more difficult when Louis Philippe wavered in the question of the choice of a King. The Minister Sebastiani declared that "Prince Leopold would be received in Belgium with cannon-shots," and the envoy Bresson, in order to escape from the impending election of the Bonapartist Duke of Leuchtenberg, held out hopes to the Belgians which actually resulted in the nomination of the Duc de Nemours on the 3rd of February. The Powers had agreed on the 1st of February to refuse the Belgian Crown, in case it was offered to a member of their respective dynasties. Talleyrand did not sign the protocol, because his powers were incomplete, but he stated that France was on the point of giving her consent. Since the 3rd of February Louis Philippe had been fully aware of his ambassador's views. The election of his son, he sent word to the King through Madame Adelaide, meant war and must be firmly declined. On the same day the Princess wrote from Paris that Prince Leopold of Coburg, whose name had been brought forward as far back as December by the

able young Belgian diplomatist Van de Weyer, was looked on as an English agent in France, and she gave Talleyrand clearly to understand that, in spite of all solemn declarations to the contrary, the possibility of the Duc de Nemours' election was still contemplated in her brother's family. "The choice lies between him and Leuchtenberg," she wrote on the 29th of January. Talleyrand had not been remiss. On the 9th of January, in a letter to Madame Adelaide, he had declared in favour of Prince Leopold, and then pronounced strongly against a scheme for the partition of Belgium, which Count Flahaut had brought over at the end of January on behalf of Sebastiani. On the 6th of February he further informed his Government that, relying on previous communications, he had just declared that the King would refuse the Crown for the Duc de Nemours, adding that "Belgium was not worth the loss of peace." It was not till that evening that he received his powers for this purpose from Paris. His reports had paved the way for the victory of reason and necessity, and consequently of his own policy.

With Casimir Périer's accession to office, in March, he felt himself on firm ground and under a Minister who appreciated and supported him. France was once more really governed. It was owing to Périer's energy that the revolutionary movement in Italy, and especially in the States of the Church, did not provoke

a rupture with Austria, and that the chastisement of the usurper Don Miguel in Portugal by France did not lead to differences with his English protectors. But when Casimir Périer sent French troops to Ancona, then occupied by Austria, without the consent of the Pope, Talleyrand did not conceal his dissatisfaction, and wrote to Madame Adelaide: "On a cru faire quelque chose d'agréable à l'opposition; tout cela a été mal compris. Il ne faut pas chercher à lui plaire, car on ne lui plaira jamais."

In the Belgian affair Périer consented to Leopold's election on condition that the Congress at Brussels complied with the stipulations of the London conference. After a reciprocal agreement at the expense of Holland Leopold took possession of his throne on the 19th of July. In April Talleyrand had obtained a promise from the Allies of 1815 that five Belgian fortresses which menaced France should be dismantled, and the new King had started for Belgium after expressing the wish to become Louis Philippe's son-in-law. A few days after he arrived the Belgians were defeated by the Dutch, who had given notice to terminate the armistice. On the 4th of August England refused the appeal for assistance which was granted by the Périer Cabinet, and on the rapid advance of the French the victorious Dutch withdrew behind their line of demarcation, whereupon Louis Philippe also ordered his troops to evacuate Belgian territory, now

declared neutral. Talleyrand succeeded once more in calming down the excitement in London by his peaceful assurances, although Palmerston considered him quite capable of having prompted "the escapade of the Dutch." On the other hand, he had to exert all his influence to make the Court and the warlike surroundings of the King in Paris adhere to his policy of peace, which Casimir Périer defended in the Chambers. When Lord Londonderry made personal allusions to Talleyrand's career in the service of the various governments which had succeeded each other in France, and regretted the influence which "a person of this kind" had on the British Ministry, the Duke of Wellington rose to state that never had the character of a man been more unjustly attacked than that of Prince Talleyrand, whom he had always found as loyal and honourable towards foreign Powers as he was steadfast and enlightened with regard to the interests of his own country. Talleyrand was seen in tears, with the Duke's speech in his hand: "À Paris pour lequel je me tue, personne n'imagine d'en faire autant," he wrote to a life-long confidant.

After this last crisis had been surmounted the Belgian difficulty was finally settled on the 15th of November by the London conference and in a treaty of twenty-four articles, a result due to the close concert of France with England. Prussia, Austria, and Russia had, after considerable hesitation, at last

ratified it, when Casimir Périer was carried off by the cholera on the 16th of May, 1832. In London the belief prevailed that the Minister consulted the ambassador on home as well as foreign policy. At all events, Talleyrand felt the loss of the great statesman most deeply ; an army of a hundred lambs led by a lion, he wrote with reference to him, inspires more fear than an army of a hundred lions commanded by a lamb. He himself felt weary, and on the 3rd of May wrote to the Finance Minister, Baron Louis, that he thought of retiring from public life : "I have been serving France for fifty years, and it was always France that required my services. Good can be done and mischief prevented at all times. That is the reason why in my opinion one ought, if one loves one's country, to serve it under every form of government which it may adopt."

But the time for retirement had not yet come. The Dutch would not surrender Antwerp, and it was not till 1839 that their Government finally resigned itself to the loss of Belgium. In France, after five months of uncertainty, during which the expediency of a Talleyrand Ministry was considered, "the Ministry of all the talents," including Broglie, Guizot, and Thiers, succeeded Casimir Périer on the 11th of October under the presidency of Marshal Soult, more firmly pledged to the cause of order than even their predecessors. On instructions from the new Minister for Foreign

Affairs, Broglie, Talleyrand concluded the Franco-English convention of October 22nd, with the object of compelling the Dutch by force of arms to carry out the treaty of November 15th. The ambassador was highly dissatisfied with the menacing attitude of the Belgians and with the encouragement which Louis Philippe gave them, but the Conservative Ministry had to be kept in power, and for this purpose stood in need of success abroad, a consideration which induced Palmerston to conclude the convention. The London conference was dissolved, the three Eastern Powers made no secret of their displeasure, and Prussia, who refused all co-operation, collected a corps on the frontier. On the 14th of November, however, Louis Philippe once more ordered his troops to enter Belgium in accordance with the request of King Leopold. Talleyrand, who had secured England's consent at the eleventh hour, was kept awake with anxiety. He was not afraid of a European coalition, but dreaded untoward proceedings on the part of the Belgians, who were excluded from all military action. But although four hundred thousand armed men were in close proximity to each other, the statesmen succeeded in limiting the conflict. Antwerp capitulated on the 23rd of December, and, as he had done in the autumn of 1831, Talleyrand declared his own honour as well as that of the Minister and of the King himself pledged to the speedy recall of the French army. It

took place, and on the 21st of May, 1833, the King of the Netherlands had to sign the convention which, pending the definite conclusion of peace, provided for the cessation of hostilities and the free navigation of the Scheldt.

The Belgian difficulty was thus settled after well-nigh three years of anxious harassing work. But almost simultaneously the conflict between the Porte and her powerful vassal Mehemet Ali brought the Eastern question once more to the front. The Sultan, to whom England refused protection, turned in his distress to Russia for assistance. French sympathies were with the Pasha, the attention of the French having been once more fixed on North Africa since the reign of Charles X. and the expedition to Algiers. The Duc de Broglie, however, was guided by the necessity of counteracting Russian influence, and tried to persuade England and even Austria to join in united action. "It is the continuation of what you began at the Congress of Vienna," he wrote to Talleyrand. But Mehemet Ali, who had been encouraged in his revolt against the Porte by French agents in Alexandria, paid no attention to the French ambassador when the latter adopted a different course and took the Sultan's part. The Russians lost no time in coming to the aid of the Turks, and the intervention of England, when it did take place, came too late to prevent the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, concluded

between Russia and Turkey on the 8th of July, 1833. England now was eager for action, and the Duc de Broglie, who wished to avoid war, found Talleyrand too yielding towards the English Cabinet. Peace was preserved through Metternich's mediation; but the Emperor Nicholas revenged himself for the conduct of France at Constantinople by the agreements of Münchengrätz directed against the principle of non-intervention and the propaganda of the Revolution. The irritation on both sides, and the Duc de Broglie's pen-and-ink warfare with St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Vienna, led Louis Philippe to propose an offensive and defensive alliance in London, which was declined by Lord Palmerston. Some months afterwards, in April 1834, Broglie retired for a short time, owing to a vote of the Chamber. His unbending stubbornness wearied and irritated the King. "It is the vocation of the Duc de Broglie not to be Minister of Foreign Affairs," Talleyrand remarked jestingly. A few days after his retirement, the quadruple alliance of the 22nd of April, between France, England, Spain, and Portugal, was announced to Europe. The Western Powers joined hands against the absolutist factions in Madrid and Lisbon, and in favour of the constitutional régime of Queen Christine in Spain and Donna Maria in Portugal. Talleyrand carried the treaty, although France raised objections to the female line of succession in Spain, and Lord Palmerston had already come to terms with Spain

and Portugal, without acquainting France of his intention to do so. The Eastern Powers thought that the Anglo-French understanding had reached its height, and replied to this revenge for Münchengrätz by taking sides with Don Carlos. But in reality this was not the case, for from this moment Louis Philippe's English alliance began to give way. He had long wished to consolidate his throne by drawing nearer to the Eastern Powers, and was against armed intervention in Spain. Talleyrand now supported him in both these respects.

Talleyrand resigned the London ambassadorship in November 1834, in order, as he wrote to Gagern, "not to be obliged to hear with the *solve senescentem* of Horace that he had delayed the step too long." A remark made by the young Duke of Orléans was the immediate cause of his retirement. The King asked Talleyrand what men he should employ, and received the brief reply, "Tous ceux dont je ne sais pas le nom;" whereupon the Prince after the formation of the Ministry observed that Talleyrand would not be of much further use in London. When Madame Adelaide tried to efface the impression made by her nephew's careless remark, he wrote back: "He is quite right, for I am old and infirm, and it pains me to see my own generation disappear. I belong to another age and do not feel at home in this." Lord Palmerston's deliberate want of consideration and

his invincible distrust of France contributed to this depression. Talleyrand, however, had a high opinion of his ability, although he said he lacked "le talent du raisonnement." The real motives which led him to bring his public career of fifty years to a close, lay deeper. He thought that with the Reform Bill England had entered on a path which would lead to a complete reconstruction of her institutions, and convert the greatest aristocratic government of modern times into a democratic community. The parliamentary revolution, which he compared to 1789, might be inevitable. At all events, the new order of things did not inspire him with the same confidence as the institutions which had created the British empire. His last communications to the King from London ran thus: "Qu'est-ce que V.M. a encore à attendre de l'Angleterre? Nous avons exploité son alliance et nous n'avons plus aucun avantage à en retirer. C'est à notre alliance avec l'Angleterre que nous devons la conservation de la paix; maintenant elle n'a que des révolutions à nous offrir. L'intérêt de V.M. exige donc qu'elle se rapproche des puissances orientales . . . . Les grandes cours ne vous aiment pas, mais elles commencent à vous estimer." Talleyrand did not wish to give up the English Alliance, but to extend it into a union of the great Powers, "with the object of repelling the attack made on existing civilisation by the adherents of a

chimerical one." In this sense he influenced the King and the Minister Thiers, who was now more and more coming to the front, against the Duc de Broglie, who was too exclusively dominated by his English sympathies. Personally, his chief preoccupation after his retirement was to play out his part on the world's stage with the well-bred decorum which constituted all his idea of dignity, and made life in his eyes a work of art to which he could give the finishing touches up to the very end.

On his return from London Princess Talleyrand was still alive, and he did not fail to send to enquire after her when an illness, which caused her death, attacked her in 1835. His own robust constitution, and the peculiarity that there was a pause at every sixth beat of his pulse, enabled him to retain his usual habits up to an advanced age, and to do with very little sleep. Up to the last he wore his own hair in powdered curls, and he seemed to the younger generation like an apparition from former days when he ascended the tribune of the Institute, on the 3rd of March, 1838, and in his deep but still powerful and distinctly audible voice, pronounced the academic eulogy on his old colleague, Count Reinhard. He reminded his audience that Reinhard, like Montesquiou, Sieyès, Baron Louis, Fouché, Daunou, and La Besnardière, was a theologian, said that sincerity and uprightness were the best qualifications of a diplomatist, and com-

mended "la religion du devoir" in the service of the State. This was his last appearance in public. Disagreeable scenes at the funeral of his friend, the Duke de Liancourt, had already made him take precautionary measures, and a letter of retractation to the Archbishop of Paris was ready for signature. One day the Archbishop's Vicar-General, the Abbé Dupanloup, who was giving religious instruction to the young daughter of the Duchess of Dino, received an invitation to dinner from Talleyrand, which he declined with the remark that he was not a man of the world. "Cet homme ne sait pas son métier," observed the master of the house. He then had several consultations with this pious, intelligent priest, under whose supervision Ernest Renan was at that time growing up in the seminary. Dupanloup brought him a draft of a fresh declaration. "Pas encore," said Talleyrand, and put it in his drawer. Soon afterwards he was attacked with a painful malady, which necessitated an operation. He bore his sufferings with the greatest fortitude and patience. When he was on his deathbed the King came early in the morning to bid him farewell. "It is the greatest honour that has ever been done to my house," said the sick man; and then, retaining his old correctness of manner and self-control, he presented the various persons surrounding him to the monarch. His young niece, "l'idole de sa vieillesse," as he called her, whose love for him lasted

through her life, knelt by his bedside and prayed for him. The reception-rooms of the Hôtel St. Florentin were once more crowded with inquisitive people and friends, among the latter Royer-Collard. On hearing how critical the Prince's state was the stern old parliamentarian remarked : "He was always a man of pacification ; he will not refuse to make his peace with God before he dies." "I do not refuse," was the dying man's answer when told of this. The priest was summoned, and Talleyrand signed two documents, one addressed to the Archbishop and the other to the Pope. In them he expressed his regret for the scandal which he had given, but threw the responsibility for it on those who had laid on him the burden of a vocation "for which he was not fitted by nature." Gregory XVI. called Talleyrand's reconciliation with the Church the most gratifying event of his pontificate. He died on the 17th of May, 1838, and was buried at Valençay.

From the point of view of the world, which jestingly remarked of the dead man, "Il est mort en homme qui sait vivre," his life might be called a happy one. He was loaded with honours and dignities, and had achieved extraordinary success. One thing, however, was lacking, which can only be attained by sacrifice of self. He, who accomplished so much, was incapable of renunciation for the sake of a higher aim. Wealth, admiration, and love were at his command,

but not respect. Who can say that he did not feel remorse for this in pondering over the past? Perchance in looking back this devotee of the other sex called to mind the words which were addressed to him by a woman: "Êtes-vous heureux? Avec un esprit si supérieur, n'allez-vous pas quelquefois au fond de tout, c'est-à-dire, jusqu'à la peine?"

Contemporaries have passed their verdict on the individual. We at the close of the century must acknowledge that the statesman devoted rare ability to the service of an elevated ideal of patriotism. The experiences of a stormy career led him to the conclusion that a monarchy founded on free institutions was the form of government which France required for the development of her civilisation and the preservation of her greatness. His perception that the dominant factor of the future was, not the policy of Cabinets, but the economic welfare of the masses, placed him two generations in advance of his age, and his legacy to the world was peace.

THE END.

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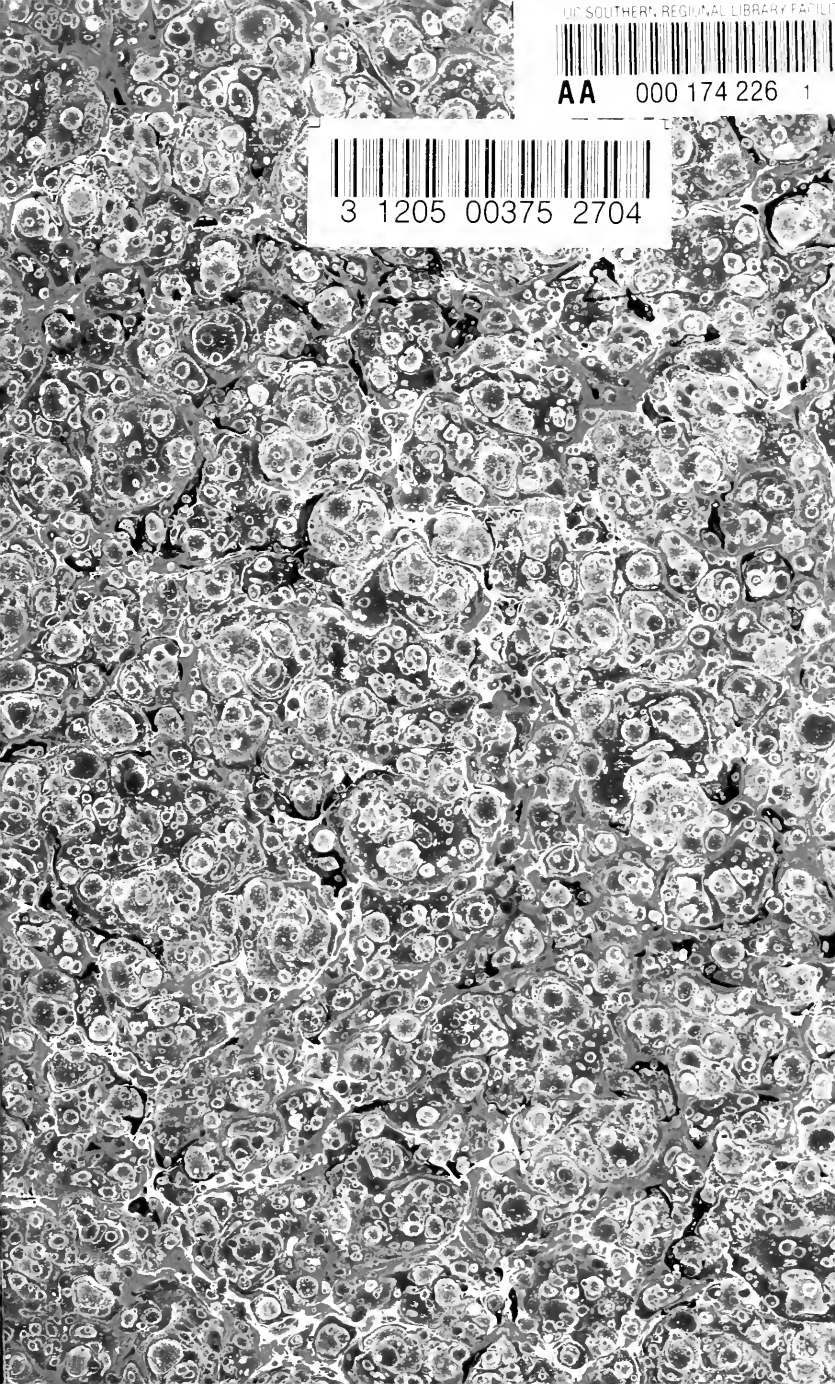
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